LETTERS FROM INDIA

BY

THE HON. EMILY EDEN

Author of

'Up the Country' 'Semi-Detached House'

&c.

EDITED BY HER NIECE

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LETTERS FROM INDIA.

TO THE HON. AND REV. ROBERT EDEN.

Government House, April 12, 1837.

MY DEAREST ROBERT,—Think of your overland letters of February 1, with papers of February 3, arriving to-day, April 12—only two months and a week. To be sure, that overland business is a lottery, but when it does come up a prize, it is worth all the hazard, but it takes quite a bewildering effect on one's mind. We have had in the last *five days* letters by sea of September and October up to October 24. That is, in fact, where we have left off all the real and complete details of home. Then yesterday there came by a *sailing* vessel the overland letters of September, October, and November 24.

You cannot think how we rummage about

the letters, and pick out a stitch here and put in a patch there, and bring dates and hints together, and make out a story of a life for you all. I dare say not at all the true one, but still it sounds so to us, and it does very well. Now you can't do that for us; you can't put the scenery to us, nor the right faces to the people just now. I have not been well for five days; supposed to have caught cold by sitting in front of a *tattee*—the first day of the tattees, and the bheesties wetted it so well, that I caught my death by it. Now you don't see the scene, with the thatched windows and the black gentlemen without clothing splashing water all over them.

Ever yours affectionately,

E. E.

THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Barrackpore, April 14, 1837.

My dearest ——,—This is the hopeless experiment we all weakly make of sending letters overland, but I am not going to say much to you, because I am just sending you off a regular book of a letter by sea, the sort of thing you will never get through; but then 'it shows my devotion.' I am also sending you, at

last, those herons' feathers. They came to me, as you will see, in two round ostentatious cases. I grumbled over them for a week, because I think they look rather like crows' feathers fainted away. However, when I was ejaculating over them, and showing them to Emily, sneering a great deal at clever ——, and a great deal at you for thinking those could be what you wanted, his jemadars made a dart at them, expressed many Eastern signs of admiration and astonishment, and said that except Runjeet Singh nobody ever had such. From which I judge that you and he must be very much alike in your ways. Lady William Bentinck had some, and wore them with a turban and a diamond; the jemadars evidently thought it was a grand moment for her, and said, 'I suppose it only Lady Bentinck who wear these in England.' In the meantime I do not know their price, but I should think not above 500,000 rupees; of course, no object to you. Perhaps they may be less; indeed, I have a notion that Major —— mentioned fifty rupees as their probable price. I will honestly let you know. I have put in some black feathers with a white stripe. You need have no scruple about letting

me give you them; they are like those the natives wear in their turbans at the Mohurram festival, with silver tassels at the end of each feather to make them droop. Runjeet and Lady L——, your two congenial souls, would put diamonds, and you owe it to them to do the same thing.

Talking of Runjeet, the man has been marrying his heir to his niece, and anything like the splendour of the proceedings I have never heard of. 300,000 people followed the procession, and he gave a rupee to each. He had all his troops manœuvred before Sir H. Fane and there were 5,000 chiefs, all in different armour—some in splendid chain armour; and, as they galloped by, they all threw rupees on a particular spot on a carpet. The bride's dowry was eleven elephants richly caparisoned—that is, with quantities of jewels, 101 camels, and so on, besides shawls and jewels without end.

Runjeet was told that we were very sorry this marriage did not take place next year, when we should be up the country, and he sent word that every fête should be repeated if we would promise to come. The fêtes lasted a

fortnight, and have cost more lacs of rupees than I dare tell you. I fancy he is a great man. I wonder he does not turn us all out of the country. It turns out, too, that he is quite a chicken—only fifty-two years old.

Yours most affectionately,

F. H. EDEN.

THE HON. E. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

April 28, 1837.

Before I forget, I may as well mention that I do not think it *would* answer to buy a set of trinkets here. They say when we are up at Delhi we shall be more tempted by jewellery, but here I am come out of my *engouement* for native jewellery. It is so difficult to get it well executed, and it wants the finish of English and French jewellery. Turquoises are cheap, and most unset stones are cheaper than in England, and I think for ladies who have plenty of trinkets, some Indian jewellery is a very good addition, but it would not answer for people with a small stock. The gold is so excessively pure, that it is an excellent *investment*, and you can sell your bracelet or comb, when tired of it,

for almost its original cost; still you get much less show for the money than with a larger supply of trinkets in English jeweller's gold. And then the natives have not learnt that new knack of making a necklace turn by manifold clasps into a *brooch* and *sevigné* and bracelets, which is useful in a small way. —— has written to me for a comb, which is exactly the very thing the natives can do in perfection; but then I must catch a jeweller, and he is brought to Government House, and our sircar buys the turquoises, and weighs the gold, and sits by and *targes* the man at his work, and, as it is a simple, plain, straightforward comb, it will be very well done and worth its weight in gold; but a *set* of ornaments I should be afraid to undertake here. If very much tempted at Delhi, Mr. —— must never be surprised if I *grab* at a pair of bangles for the girls. I mean he must always keep his fortune in that sort of state, that a sudden call for 10*l.* may not prove a serious inconvenience. There may even be a run on the bank for 12*l.*, and so he must be ready. I shall be grieved if a terrible smash —the great panic of 1838—could be traced back to my Delhi extravagance.

Wednesday, April 29.

The 'Belle Alliance,' like a dear as she is, came in on Monday with quantities of letters—a nice long one from you.

We had a dinner for the Bishop on Monday, and he is as jolly as anyone I ever met, and likes a joke. I do not wonder people all exclaim at the coolness of Government House, and indeed profess to catch cold there. The heat of the few houses we have been in is almost stifling.

Friday, April 31.

I saw the French manager on Wednesday, and settled to have a French play at our little theatre, which always stands primed for acting in the ball-room on the third storey.

Wednesday, May 3.

George went down to Calcutta on Monday morning, and did the great dinner there by himself, as Fanny is always glad of an excuse to stay at Barrackpore, and we have put off our play till next week. We have had two beautiful thunderstorms, and the weather is not at all hot, comparatively speaking.

Saturday, May 6.

George came back early on Thursday, time enough for me to take my first airing with him. The park looks so green and fresh; it would be a nice place in England, where one could go out in daylight. The birds affect a little singing at this time of the year, a wretched confused *ramage*, without any keynote, and incoherent to the last degree, but still the attempt is commendable and spring-like; and there is a cuckoo who at this season tries to talk: he says Cuck—and can't say Coo. However, he is very good to speak any English.

The bachelors of Barrackpore gave a ball last night, and we lent them the Flagstaff Bungalow, thinking we should be at Calcutta, but, as we have been kept here, George thought it would be civil to go.

I never mentioned that the 'Catherine' at last came in on Thursday with quantities more letters. I do not think it signifies the least the letters coming out of their turns; we read them just as much, and it is surprising how *un*like they are to each other, considering that you are all writing about the same events; but the little bits of private family history always tell

best, and the more you write to the day the more real the letters seem. It is very odd what extraordinary interest those few scratches of a black liquid on a white pulp can give, because the same number of words said in conversation would go a very little way; and yet one folds up a letter with an air of pompous satisfaction, and says, 'Ah! it is very comfortable to know all they have been about'—a deception, only I do not mean to see through it.

Monday.

There is a good story they have also got in the papers. The privates of the Cameronian Regiment acted a play last week (remarkably well, they say), and offered the proceeds to the European Orphan Asylum; the children there are soldiers' orphans. The paper was circulated to the ladies of the committee, and Fanny and I, and a majority of the ladies, put our names to a resolution that we accepted their contribution with thanks, &c. While we were at Barrackpore two ladies re-circulated the paper (which is against all the rules of the establishment), and they and some others drew

up some very absurd resolutions—that no establishment could expect the blessing of Providence that received contributions earned in this unchristian manner; that if the orphans (a remarkably naughty set of spoiled girls) knew such subscriptions were received, it would hurt their feelings and their principles; and they ended by refusing 640 rupees—a great help to the school, and which these poor men have earned in the most respectable manner. We saw all this in the paper, but did not believe it until it was confirmed, and now George is vexed about it, and half the military people are threatening to withdraw their subscriptions.

We had a great dinner to-day, but I have not begun to dine down yet.

Wednesday.

The Asylum question rages, and, as —— says, it is lucky we can all make so much excitement out of it. We got back the committee paper to-day, and George drew up an excellent protest, which Fanny and I have signed, and transmitted to the other ladies.

We had our French play in the evening—two

little vaudevilles uncommonly well acted, and the theatre is one of the prettiest I have seen. It makes a very good change from the constant balls, and it is a pity the French people are going away. It was all over at eleven.

Thursday.

I have got a story for some of your smallest children, probably middle-aged men by this time, but a simple story for what they were when I left home. I told Major —— to give the two little boys who wait on Fanny and me gold lace to their turbans and sashes, which is the great aim in life of the under-servants, and as these little boys always stand behind us at dinner, they have a claim to be as smart as the others. But when the liveries were made my little boy, who is the youngest and a good little child in general, had chosen to stay away for a week, thereby losing his lessons as well as staying at home without leave; so I told the sircar not to let him have his smart dress, but to give it to Fanny's boy without delay, in order to make the *moral* more striking. When any of the servants are promoted, they always come to make their salaam to all of us, so Fanny's boy walked into

my room, looking very fine, and as he went through the passage he taunted my little boy with it. Mine came in very unhappy and repentant, but I said it was quite impossible to reward him, as he never would learn anything if he loitered at home; so he walked out again, borrowed a sheet of paper, and said he would write a petition for himself, to show that he had learnt something. He brought it in, with one of the hirkarus, to present it; it was a good specimen of a short request. However, I said I would think about it, but could not let him have his turban directly; and in about two hours Rosina, and the jemadar, and two or three others, came to beg I would let him have it, for he had been crying so they did not know what to do with him. 'And he is so young child, and his little face is grown so small, it quite melancholy, and he say he so ashamed to wait at dinner with the choota lady's boy quite smart;' so of course I gave way, as it is always a pity to vex a child, and his face really was grown small. The people here always put me in mind of Number Nip's friends, who were made of turnips, and withered in twenty-four hours. They have no

bone, and no muscles, and fade away, and fatten out again *à volonté*.

I heard a noise in my passage when I was dressing in the evening, and sent Rosina to ask what it was, and she said that the servants were all laughing, because the little boy was telling them that, when I was ill, he had promised to his god that he would give all my servants a feast (which consists in cake and sugar) when I got well, and that now he had got his new dress he meant to give it to-morrow, and he was inviting them all. I dined down to-day, my recovery being entirely complete, and I am probably much the better for the attack.

Friday.

This morning there came out of the extreme far end of the hold of the 'Catherine,' a box from Rodwell, with a real good satisfactory profusion of books, and we did not expect them, which made it all the pleasanter; and when we all dispersed after luncheon, everybody had at least three volumes, under each arm. Even Captain ——, whose studies are few and far between, stepped off with 'Mrs. Armitage.' We have read 'Boz' before, but that was one I

was most charmed to see. I look upon it as a book of reference, and it was a great inconvenience not having a copy in the house. The 'Pickwicks' are equally valuable.

Sunday.

We went to church armed, with money to give to a charity sermon that had been advertised for the late fires; and the Archdeacon began with a capital text about wind and fire, but it suddenly turned into a sermon for the Church Missionary Society, which has been quarrelling with other societies; so Fanny and I began halving our rupees, and George tore up his draft of 50*l.*, and wrote another in pencil for 10*l.*; and the aides-de-camp, who had clearly not listened for the conclusion, whispered to know whether it was a charity *they* ought to give to; and, in the meanwhile, the service lasted two hours and a half, on one of the very hottest days we have had this year. George came home so hot that he declared he would not stir out again all day. However, he thought better of it, and went out with me in the carriage. —— has set up a new curricle.

Tuesday, May 16.

We had a great dinner yesterday; but they are much less dull and formal since that new arrangement of sitting in the Marble Hall, where nobody can sit in a circle, if they wish it ever so much.

I am quite well again, and began riding again yesterday. All the others are quite well too. In three months our advanced guard of horses, goods, &c., will be setting off. They go six weeks before us, or two months, as we shall go by steamer to Allahabad. We make all these arrangements before George, who says nothing, but has, in fact, made up his mind to go. Sir H. Fane writes such delicious accounts of the mountains, and he says that now, when we are all melting, they have roaring fires morning and evening, and are out all day. 'Can such things be, and overcome us like a *winter* cloud, without our special wonder?' Well, I begin to see things in Lord ——'s cheerful way. In five months we shall be travelling, and we shall be marching about for a year and a half, and then we shall not have quite two years more of Calcutta; and then there is only the voyage, and then you must be at Portsmouth if we go by sea, or Dover if overland. I think you had better go

there now, for fear of accident. Just stop! I will come in a minute. God bless you all! You are still my very dearest friend.

Yours affectionately,

E. E.

TO A FRIEND.

Barrackpore, May 3, 1837.

SCENE: *Verandah at Barrackpore. Time, sunset, or rather later. Atmosphere, close. Garden, below the verandah. River and Serampore, beyond.*

[*Enter four bearers, and place sofa in verandah, and retire. Enter from a side-door an interesting and languid European female with opened and unopened letters in her hand, followed by various domestics carrying footstool, shawl, book, &c.* Lady *speaks fretfully,*]

Jemadar, do put the sofa in the draft.

[Jemadar *snaps his fingers, and the bearers move the sofa.* Lady *reads, apparently with intense interest, long sheets of paper, evidently a journal from a friend, and probably dated October, smiles occasionally, and then speaks (mentally),*]

I declare that is a very pleasant journal, and I never thought the letters from the 'Catherine' could have come up so soon. These journals are very pleasant indeed; I think I could answer them on the spot, only it is too dark and too much trouble, and too hot, and too everything. [*Music heard.*] Well there's a bagpipe; that's odd. I will mention that to ——: national, romantic, and better than a tomtom. Qui hi?

Jemadar. Ladyship?

Lady. Fetch the telescope out of my room.

J. Huninelkawn, Dulhoo, Ameer, fetch glass.

[*They all three go and come back, one with the glass, one with the stand, and one with a little table.* Lady *looks; as usual can't see through it, but, to save appearances, says, without observing that the top is still on the glass,*]

Ah! I see. The music is in a boat at Serampore; what does it mean?

J. Rich native, Ladyship, been to fetch wife; hire music to do himself honour. Very fine wedding.

L. That will be something for my letter to ——; give the ignorant European child an idea of Indian customs, also mention to her that to make the music of the bagpipe pleasant it is as well to station the piper in the Danish territories and to remain yourself in the British dominions, with water between the two. In England this might be done with even better effect than at Barrackpore; the distance of Copenhagen would perhaps render the effect still more pleasing! it would be more softened, harmonised, subdued; you would hardly know it *was* a bagpipe.

[*A white goat rushes by, followed by a man and then a deer and then another man, all running as hard as they can.*]

L. Qui hi?

J. Ladyship.

L. Tell that man not to hunt Sulema, and tell the other man not to hunt the choota lady's deer.

[*The* Jemadar *talks the gibberish which the natives are pleased to call Hindustani and says,*]

By your favour, Ladyship, the doorias say the goat afraid of the deer and the deer afraid.

of the goat, and they both run away and the doorias can't catch them.

L. Very well. Ask all those gardeners what they are doing to my garden.

J. They say the storm yesterday blow Ladyship's garden away, and they putting it all back again very neat.

There! That is word for word what passed this evening as I was reading your journal, and I thought I would write it straight down for fun, that you might know exactly that bit of my life. I had not gone out, as it was very close and I had not been well.

A 'tomtom' is a drum, a 'dooria' is a man who looks after dogs and animals. Fanny is always called the choota lady, and I am the burra lady, when they talk *of* us, and the 'ladyship' which they address *to* us is only a corruption of Lady Sahib, not an English ladyship.

We have had two such storms since we have been here. Three of our boats were sunk, but fished up again, the thatch over the verandah blown into the trees, the trees blown into the river, the garden into the house, and the chairs

into the park; and the thunder sometimes *roars* for an hour without stopping, not grumbling thunder, but it is in a regular roaring passion. These storms make the air very cool for a day, and altogether this is not near such a bad hot season as the last, or we do not feel it so much.

There have been shocking fires at Calcutta, partly because the huts are so dry; they catch fire on the slightest provocation, and the wind is so high it is impossible to stop the flames. There were about 80,000 homeless people last week, allowing four for each burnt hut, which is very few. They huddle together for a few days and then build their huts again, but it looks very melancholy in the meantime.

Rosina has just got the gown Willy Eden sent her and is quite mad about it, carrying it to all the servants and kissing his note, which she asked me to let her have, that she might get somebody to Hindustani it for her.

Ever, dearest, yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO A FRIEND.

Barrackpore, May 19, 1837.

I always skip two or three days after sending off a letter and drop a stitch or so, which rather varies and improves the pattern. The ——s dined with us on Wednesday; Mr. —— went to join Sir H. Fane on his visit to Runjeet Singh, and is just returned. As he is not a 'Company's servant,' he of course was allowed to take any present Runjeet gave him; and the agonies of the other ladies in Calcutta have been intense on hearing that he was bringing his wife a pair of massive bangles and two splendid shawls, besides other ornaments, from the King of Delhi.

I was quite disappointed yesterday when Mrs. —— sent me her presents to look at, that we might attest their magnificence was not appalling. Two old patched shawls and two bracelets, such as our ayahs wear. I am vexed that the envy of the others should be gratified, and that Mrs. ——, who is a very nice person and handsome, should not have what she liked.

Runjeet has sent us most pressing invitations

by Mr. ——, with a promise to repeat all his festivities if we will go and see him; and I hope we may. We had tribes of visitors on Thursday morning. I cannot think how they can come out in the daytime during this month; and they all say it kills them, but still they come. The number makes very little difference to us, but we shut the gates now very precisely as the clock strikes one, as two hours of it are more than enough. We all came up by land in the afternoon to a very late dinner.

Sunday, 21st.

Mrs. —— has actively employed herself in raising subscriptions for adding glass windows to the church, and it is rather improved, but still it is a fearfully hot day, and I got the headache for the whole afternoon by going to church. It is a very mistaken piece of devotion at this time of year, or rather interferes with all other devotion.

We were an immense party on the road quite late at night, going down to Calcutta.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Barrackpore, May 22, 1837.

Didn't I get your No. 7 last week? Have I not got your No. 8 this week? And don't I mean to have your No. 9 next? There is some sense when letters come in that way; it looks almost as if the sea were beginning to listen to reason. We have had heaps of letters during the last fortnight—none of a later date than the middle of January—but there is a quantity of wind just now, and evidently blowing straight from England. You all write in the same odd, dreamy way about some white, cold substance which falls from the sky and cuts up your communication with each other—the tops of Twelfth cakes probably, and very tiresome and sticky it must be.

I always write to you when I am here, because, though all the windows and blinds are shut, and the house, in fact, full of people, there is a false air of liberty and solitude about it, which is exhilarating. The only civility we can show our female guests is to beg them to have *tiffin* sent to their bungalows, because it must be so unpleasant to cross in the sun; and

generally they most heartily accept it; so from breakfast to dinner we see nothing of them. Then we do contrive to get out half an hour earlier here than at Calcutta; and there never was anything like the green of the park and the beauty of the river just now. The school is finished—really a beautiful building. And we have a most clever native schoolmaster. In two months he has taught his two first, classes to read English, and answer English questions, quite wonderfully; and, indeed, all the little black boys in the village show their vocation for study by running after the carriage by moonlight and calling out 'Good morning, sir!' The menagerie is flourishing too, though the young tiger showed a young fancy for a young child, and is shut up in consequence; and the little bear gave a little claw at a little officer, and is shut up too; and the large white monkey, which *was* shut up, got out, walked into the coachman's bungalow, and bit a little boy's ear; and the three sloths have been taking a lively turn, which is horrid and supernatural; and his 'Excellency' has got an odd twist upon the subject of the rhinoceroses, and connives at their fence not being mended,

so that they may roam about the park, whereby a respectable elderly gentleman, given to dining out at the cantonments, has been twice nearly frightened into fits. The story, now twice repeated, of the two beasts roaring as they pursue his buggy is very moving to hear; and his 'Excellency' smiles complacently and says, 'Yes, they are fine beasts and not the least vicious.'

Chance lives and flourishes, and passes much time in the water, and has quite a travelled mind. Gazelle is lying on his shawl, with three small baskets before him, filled respectively with rice, leaves, and grass, and is growing rather tall.

Believe me, yours most affectionately,

F. H. EDEN.

FROM THE HON E. EDEN TO THE COUNTESS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Government House, May 24, 1837.

MY DEAREST SISTER,—It is an immense time, I suspect, since I have written to you, but Fanny was sending you off, first, her journal and then a letter; and we generally divide our correspondents on the liberal principle, that, as we

have only nothing apiece to give away in matter of news, it would be better to give it in large handfuls than in small quantities.

We are doing our hot month of May with considerable suffering, but certainly with less than last year. We manage the shutting up of the house better and keep ourselves quieter, and we allege all these kind of reasons, but the real truth is, I suppose, that we are becoming *acclimatised* more or less—rather less than more, but still we are becoming blind to our wretched position.

I never eat any fruit but mangoes, though I see all the others working away at the peaches (which used to make us die of laughing last year) and declaring that it is wonderful how the Indian peaches are come on. It is only the English peaches that have *gone back*; these are about the size of the first small ones that the frost nips off, rather more shrivelled and with not so much taste. We have also discovered that the white, tasteless asparagus is 'really not amiss,' much more like English asparagus than it was last year.

We have been revelling in that heap of books that —— has at last wrung from the hard hands

of Rodwell. They are an excellent collection, and we are pretending to say that we will keep some of the best unread, for our camp life ; but, in fact, I am going rapidly through them all, and with such a well-grounded confidence in the deteriorated state of my memory that I am sure they will be all new books again in five months. I thought I would keep back Mrs. Hemans, but it is such a pretty-looking book that I am going to succumb to it to-day.

I heard a shocking story at dinner yesterday. The Archdeacon was sent for two days ago, to see a boy, the son of a friend, who was dying ; and yesterday they sent to tell him that the boy had died at three in the morning, and asked him to perform the funeral, which is always here within twenty-four hours of the death. He went yesterday evening for that purpose. The boy was in his coffin, but, just as they were setting off, it was discovered that he was still alive. I have not heard how he is to-day, but I suspect those mistakes must sometimes occur in this country, from the hurry in which funerals are necessarily performed. I do not mean to allow myself to faint away on any account, for fear of accidents.

How is your garden? You have not mentioned any particular change in your East Combe grounds, and you rather neglect Dandy in your letters. Chance is particularly well, and has found a new pursuit in some yellow flying frogs in a tank at Barrackpore, quite as good flying fish as any I saw at sea, though they say they skim along the water only by the assistance of their very long legs. However, the 'Prince Royal' puts them up on the bank, and points as if they were partridges, and then goes in after them; and a flying-frog pursuit is evidently extremely fascinating, as his man had to go into the water to fetch him out of it, all entreaties having failed.

I always meant to tell you of an ixora at Barrackpore, which grows so like a twisted thorn, and the stem is eight feet in circumference. It is covered with those beautiful scarlet flowers. Don't you remember when you and I went over to Bromley Hill House we raved about the ixoras? We have such accounts of trees and shrubs in the Himalayas; I think you had better come and join us there. It is no trouble, and a lovely climate—fires and blankets quite pleasant, they say. We can build you a house

if you let us know a month or two in advance, and then we can have such a good talk. What fun it would be!

Your picture is still very like you, dearest sister, and looks like a good old dear. I cannot tell what to do with my pictures when we march; Major —— must invent something. God bless you!

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——

Sunday Evening, May 28.

We are very quiet always the latter half of our Calcutta weeks, as we get over the dinners on Mondays, the balls on Tuesdays, and the rest of the time is very comfortable, and quiet is particularly acceptable this weather. This last fortnight before the rains, which are supposed to begin about June 10, is very unpleasant, so utterly breathless. The thermometer in the shade and the dark, but in the open air, is 105°; and what it is to those who drive through the sun they say nobody can conceive. Government House is the admiration of our visitors; it is so well shut and cooled this year. The

thermometer is 87° in my room, and I have discovered an accidental draft in the Marble Hall, where the wind comes down one of the corridors, cooled by the tatties, and where Fanny and I have sat all this week without a punkah; the draft is so strong Major —— said it was very unwholesome, and that Lady William never sat there, which I assured him must simply have been because she never had the luck to find out this curious draft; upon which he sent the doctor to say how prejudicial it must be; but the doctor found it so pleasant that he drew in an arm-chair and thought it much the best place in the house.

Major —— is a remarkably sly old fox. Fanny and I have often observed it, and we constantly find him out now. He manages us in a sly, pleasant way, buttering and smoothing, but he sees through everybody and provides accordingly.

A shocking piece of foxishness I detected to-day which will be the utter wreck of my happiness. George's head servant, who claims the title of 'the nazir' and who was a treasure in his way, went to his own house at Dacca to try to get rid of a Bengal fever, which had

baffled Dr. Drummond. He had leave of absence for two months, and he has now been gone four, and, as he was always consumptive, it is obvious that the poor dear nazir is dead. I got Major —— to write to him, and no answer is come; so I told him to be making arrangements for a new one, as amongst the twenty other servants who wait in George's passage there is not one who speaks a word of English. I cannot think how he has put up so long with the extreme inconvenience. I followed —— to George's room after breakfast to settle this important point, and found him actually proposing to George to take my jemadar, that jewel of a man! who speaks English perfectly, and is my stay and support—matches my gowns and sashes, washes up my painting box, and takes care of everything I have, money included. I said yesterday before him that I was going to model something George wanted, and when I went to my room I found some clay prepared and a board and all my tools and even some print books; it is just the same about everything, and I am convinced that a *good* native servant is the best in existence. The bad are perhaps very bad.

George has always envied me this man, and he said when I came in, 'Here is Miss Eden, but you might just as well propose to her to cut the nose off her face as to give me that man.' However, I always intended giving him to George if the vacancy occurred, as in going up the country he will save George an immense deal of trouble, and then it would be hard if his extreme merit stood in the way of his promotion. The nazir is the highest servant in the house, and paid accordingly. 'Yes, I think Miss Eden had better give him to your Lordship,' Major —— said; 'you will find him invaluable on the march; there is not such another man in the house, and if I take in a stranger he may be a man who will take bribes from the natives; and the jemadar knows your Lordship's habits. Your Lordship has no time to waste on a new servant, and Miss Eden has plenty of time and can easily form a new good servant.' 'Oh, dear no!' I said; 'there never was such a mistake. I always told Lord Auckland he might have my jemadar, because he likes him so much; but I really will not have any of your horrid strangers, who will steal all my goods, and take no care of Chance, and let

the embroiderers dawdle over their work, and put too much wine into the seltzer-water. I really can't what you call "form" a new servant. I will have my chobdar' (that is the next in command) 'for the new jemadar.'—'No, I think not; he is not of the proper class—not authority enough, and he cannot wait at table.'—'Then I will have one of my own kitmutgars.'—'No; they do not speak English. I have one or two men in my eye whom I have always wished to put on the Government House establishment; they speak good English and you can teach them to be good servants, and it is a great advantage to all succeeding Governors-General to find these kind of men in the house.' That was the unkindest cut of all. I do not the least care about the comfort of the future Governor-General's lady, and Major —— is always looking at the establishment in that general point of view. You, who only see Mr. Gooby or James when you ring for them and are happy in a climate which enables you to pick up your own pocket-handkerchief and cut your own pencil, and where you can speak without an interpreter—you cannot imagine how utterly our comfort depends on the tact of

these people, who never lose sight of us, and who have a crowd of subordinates to keep in order, who do not understand a word we say. If Major —— drives me into taking a stranger I think I shall make it a condition that the new man shall write my journal to you. It is the only real action of my life that I contrive to perform for myself, and in another year I should hardly be up to it in the hot season. Besides, I am sure the change will be amusing to you. And in the meantime I trust the nazir will come to life again. Major —— has written now to the resident at Dacca to find out.

Monday, 29th.

We had some few letters of January and the first week in February and a newspaper of February 15. The ministers seem to be making a good start, which is satisfactory. All our next letters must be quite *novelties*, as we have now passed the date of any overland packet.

Friday, June 2.

There never was such a day; we had nothing like it last year. Even in the evening we were for the first time unable to bear the

window open; the hot wind or steam was so oppressive, and none of us could go out. We played at chess a four-handed game by way of resting our eyes. It is the first time George has found it impossible to get on with his business.

Saturday, 3rd.

I will send this off to-day. The heat is worse than ever and the furniture cracking in all directions. People say it must end in an awful storm. The natives feel the weather even more than we do; two coolies who were bringing milk here yesterday dropped down dead in the sun. We are all, however, very well, and my health is quite come round again.

—— says she does not get my letters, which absolutely breaks my heart, because I live in a state of writing gratitude to her; but I suppose she will get them all at last. That great supply of books you sent us is such a comfort. They will last us two months more.

God bless you! Love to all.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Barrackpore, Sunday, June 4, 1837.

I sent off my journal yesterday, and, as it is too hot to do anything else, I may as well begin again.

We could not stir out again all yesterday. Two or three Barrackporeans dined with us and Mr. Trower and one or two others. We played at lottery tickets as usual in the evening. The weather is worse than ever. The thermometer was 105°, Captain —— said, in his bungalow after he opened the door for one minute to come out to luncheon. Fanny went to church, but neither George nor I did; and I do not mean to try it again till the rains.

Calcutta, Monday, 5th.

We came down late last night, and at all events this house is a little cooler than Barrackpore; the natives were all done up with it too. They have the cholera very much just now, but certainly, however tiresome the heat is, it is not an unwholesome time for Europeans. Talking of Europeans, you cannot imagine how

irritating it is that all our servants will call them Eu*rope*ans, and not Eu*rope*ans. Our English servants all want to come up by land and to have hired horses, and I generally let the maids in this weather do so, as the steamer is obliged sometimes to come in the middle of the day. I told Captain —— to desire the steamer would bring up the 'Soonamookie'—our yacht this time—as the Eu*rope*ans will not let the native servants go in the cabin of the steamer, and the old kansamah and some of the old men were half baked in the small boats; so when the 'Soonamookie' appeared, Wright, and Jones, and Mars, and Giles all announced their gracious intention of going by water, as if they could have 'my Lord's boat' to themselves; they thought it would be quite as cool as the land, so they started at four o'clock, and, what was more, declared when we arrived that it had been very pleasant.

Wednesday, 7th.

We have returned to our cool seat in the Marble Hall here, and are much better. We had a great dinner in the evening. The dinners are much less formal since we have abandoned

the drawing-room, which was too small for fifty people. Now the gentlemen can sit down if they will, and though very few of them do, still the ladies cannot get into a circle, though they do their very best.

George's chessmen of the frogs and mice, which he ordered at least eight months ago, are arrived; and I never saw anything so clever. The pawns are particularly pretty. Mr. Shakespear came this morning, and I beat him two games at chess. We had a very full party last night, and I thought there were several promising flirtations going on.

Saturday, 10th.

On Thursday we received visitors in that unaccountable cool place in the Hall, which I mentioned to you, where there is no punkah. The audacity of seeing them in a new place was almost too much for their Indian nerves and etiquette, but they were charmed with the climate. If the wind were to remit for five minutes, we should all be choked; but, coming through two tattees, half a mile off, it is delightful. I am sorry to say the wind *is* failing today, and no good prospect of rain.

Sunday, 11th.

A Mr. ——, a friend of Charles Elliot's, dined with us yesterday. He and Mr. —— are both going back to Canton, where they are pent up in a place like Burlington Arcade, without the shops, and never see a woman from one year's end to the other. The consequence is that Mr. —— thinks Calcutta a perfect Paradise. He said seriously he could not imagine so gay or so happy a place. We played at 'lottery,' as we always do when we are by way of being alone, and they thought it delightful and agreed to make a great resource of it at Canton. It is a great triumph to 'Mrs. Phillips' that lottery tickets should have spread from her drawing-room, which was not bigger 'than the summer breakfast parlour at Rosing's,'[1] to Canton by means of ——, and to Hyderabad by means of Colonel ——. He called the day before he went to join the Nizam to take leave, and in a quiet, confidential voice, said, 'And about the prizes at lottery, which half of the pack do I take them from?'

We would not go to morning church; it is

[1] See 'Pride and Prejudice,' by Miss Austen.

so dreadfully hot. Several horses died last Sunday waiting for their owners, and I hardly think one would be left to-day.

Monday, 12th.

While we were sitting at luncheon there arrived two darling packets for me, and a box for George, with Mr. ——'s card. I think he must have swum up the river with them; the ship is still at Saugur. And we have got your little box of envelopes, and my salts, and sister's ribbons, and, above all, your delicious book of a letter, which I am going to answer forthwith, just as if you would receive my answer three days hence.

I think we are all very much altered in looks since you have seen us, particularly the last two months. They have been a great trial to everybody, and the way in which the natives have died of cholera the last fortnight is lamentable. We may freshen up again a little up the country, but we are certainly grown very yellow, or brown lately, and George is very grey. His hair is growing quite white. The climate has agreed with my hair, strange to say, and it has grown thick and dark. Now I think

I have answered great part of your comments. I am more reconciled to India than I was, inasmuch as it is no use kicking against the pricks; and then the days are so monotonous that they go by quicker than they did when everything was new; and then, though the heat is in fact greater this year, we all submit to it better; and the pain of being indolent is no longer very irksome, I am ashamed to say. And, last of all, I really feel every day that I would not be away from George—and think of him alone in this country—for any earthly consideration. If it were in the slightest degree possible to repay him any part of the obligation I owe him all through life, this is, I think, the only opportunity. He could not have existed here alone, and, for want of other colleagues, I can see constantly that it is a great comfort to him to have me to talk over his little bothers with. I sent off the instant I got Mr ——'s card to ask him to dine here do-day, but he cannot come till to-morrow, which is lucky, as we shall then be alone, and to-day we have forty-five people.

Tuesday, 13th.

Sir Willoughby Cotton landed just as George and I were going out this evening, so we drove down to the ghaut to greet him, and sent another carriage to bring him to Government House, where Major —— and Captain —— were waiting at the door for him; and then pursued our airing. Mr. —— dined with us, and I got all I could out of him, but he would not say half enough. He and Sir Willoughby are of course well acquainted. Sir Willoughby is exactly like the Duke of York in voice, and look, and everything. He has amused us all very much with all the latest London gossip, and he knows all the people we know, and altogether he is an amusing incident.

Wednesday, 14th.

Lady —— came this morning to show us some work she has received, done by Spanish nuns at Manilla, on pine-apple cloth; I never saw such a curious sight, much too pretty for use. It is like old point almost worked into a web of exaggerated French cambric. She would not sell any of it, which was disappoint-

ing; but Dr. Drummond has a friend at Manilla, and he has written to order some for us.

Thursday, 15th.

A great many of the new arrivals by the 'Abercrombie' and the 'George the Fourth' called on us. One of the Mysore princes was here when Mr. —— called, and Mr. —— had luckily seen his brother at the Oriental Club in England, which delighted Ghola much.

Friday, June 16, 1837.

This may go to-morrow, I hear, so good-bye. Thank you over and over again for your present and your nice long letters and all your good things.

No rain yet. We were to have gone to Barrackpore yesterday, but when I went down to breakfast I found everybody's courage had failed, and Major —— said it would kill all the servants to move in the daytime, and the boatmen too; so we had to send for the horses and our cooks, and dinner, which had gone up in the night. It is very shocking. I do not believe in the rains of a tropical climate. It was a grand failure last year.

Ever yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO A FRIEND.

June 11, 1837.

This immense paper[1] is a great atrocity, but it can't be helped; I dare say it is, in fact, note paper, but it has been drawn out by the heat.

I cannot think what possesses me to write to you at this hour—precisely half-past twelve—when the miserable attempt at breakfast, made at nine, has ceased to give the slightest support, and when, from exhaustion and heat, and the conviction that luncheon will *never* come, I feel utterly desperate. Too weak to read, and very weak indeed to think of writing to you. Breakfast is a remarkably bad meal in this country. I wish you could see the bilious despondency with which, one after another, we all look at it; not but what there is a great choice of evils—tea and chocolate and eggs in all shapes; and meat, fish, and pine-apples, and mango fruits, and mango-fool, instead of gooseberry-fool. But it is all in vain; it is too much trouble to eat at that hour, and sundry weak voices saying,

[1] Written on full-sized letter paper.

'Peene ka pawnay' are all that is heard, which, being interpreted, means 'a glass of cold water,' and if that is not sufficiently iced, the dejection of the moment turns into slight irritation.

I wish you would come here, dear. It really is very rude your never calling, and I should like to show you my room; somehow or another I have scraped together a number of pretty things; none very valuable, but they are odd and such as you have not seen before—Chinese and Burmese, and any other *ese*, that comes in my way.

The black angel, commonly called 'ducky boy,' had a horrid narrow escape a fortnight ago. He went *frolicking* out at the gate of Government House before —— and Fanny, who were riding, and of course never supposed that the country was in that state of disorganisation that any common dogs would touch his little excellency. But two bull-dogs, whom a man was leading in a chain, flew at him and pinned him down; when —— heard the hubbub and rode on, and, by dint of sentries and syces, rescued the poor little prince, who was bit in two places, and had fainted from sheer fright. Jimmund, his servant, had flown at the owner of

the dogs, and —— says he is the first native he ever saw who gave a regular English knock-down blow; but he knocked the man right down, and then began thumping him with the end of his dog's chain, till —— advised him to beat the dogs rather than their owner. Chance was *brought to* by a warm bath, and was not really much hurt. When I came home Jimmund brought him to me, bandaged up in all directions, and told his story by means of an interpreter, who ended by saying, 'And Jimmund say he very sorry —— Sahib call him off, because he would have *deaded* the man who have those dogs.' I told him nothing could be more amiable or correct, but in general I should prefer his driving away the dogs to *deading* the man. The 'Abercrombie Robertson' is in the river, we hear, in which ship we know there is a box from —— for us with some ornamented paper; but it always takes a week to unpack a ship, and the captains clearly make it a general rule to put our boxes at the very bottom of the hold.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Government House, June 13, 1837.

MY DEAREST SISTER,—This a line, not to count, nor to have anything in it, as Fanny wrote to you three days ago, but it is a mere ebullition thrown out on the arrival of your case of ribbons. I suppose if you had ransacked London you could not have thought of anything so entirely acceptable. I give you tremendous credit for the idea, but still, you know, without detracting from your talents, there was a certain degree of luck in hitting on this 'great grand' ribbon grievance. I thought last week whether it would not be advisable to send away all my seven hurkarus, because they had hunted all through Calcutta without being able to find a *white belt.* And in a country where we live in white muslin what was I to do? My waist might have taken to growing large. If I had come home looking like the Duchess of Canvizaro you would not have known me. Independent of the pleasure of receiving this little unexpected parcel, which

dropped in at luncheon time, the real lady's-maid delight with which Wright and Jones are dividing the spoil is worth seeing. The doors of my room are open to Wright's, so I have a full view of them dividing, and probably wrangling, and my two tailors, in an attitude of deep veneration, holding two yard measures before them. They have just come in with an amiable little tartness in their voices about a piece of primrose sarcenet ribbon, 'which would be an excellent trimming for a bonnet, but does not rightly belong to either lot.' I hope they did not mean to have it themselves, for, like Alexander, I drew my rusty pair of scissors, black with the rust of the last damp week, and hacked the Gordian primrose ribbon in two. Hastings must be much altered since our time, but I have not had time to study those two little prints yet. I am so glad your last letter told us something about Dandy. You should descend more into those minute particulars. Chance is remarkably well, thank you; he never has had a fit since that one last year, and is now lying on my sofa on his back, with his four legs up in the air, reposing after his bath. I always put him after luncheon into the great

tub of water that stands in my bath-room, and he swims about in it, and then I pick him out and put him all *wet and sloshy* on a table under the punkah, and that keeps him cool for the afternoon. I would advise you to try that with Dandy when your thermometer is 110°, which it is now in the *shade, not* in the house. But do you hear the thunder? That promises the beginning of the rains, of great importance to everybody, but particularly to the poor natives. The quantity of rice for which they usually gave one rupee now costs three, and the fish in the tanks are all dead, and, as most of them earn about five rupees a month and live entirely on rice and fish, they are in great distress and dying very much of cholera.

God bless you, my particularly dear sister! I think there is some fun in sending such trash as this all across the seas—enough to make a ship sink to think of it.

Ever yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Barrackpore, Friday, June 17.

I received your overland letter of April 2 on June 12, which makes us positive neighbours again—a mere trifle of time—and as there is an overland despatch going home on Monday, which will have the honour of conveying this, our communication will be unpleasantly quick. The pen with which, like Niobe, all ink, you last wrote will hardly be dry before you have to begin again. The only fault of these overland letters is that, by going about in that harum-scarum way, they rather spoil—not much but just a *leetle*—the merit of those plodding navigating epistles, which come in, in their proper course, and find themselves forestalled in most of their news. It tells, however, both ways. I can open all the letters that are to come, till they have worked up to April, without any horrible palpitation as to their containing any misfortune. We know generally that you were all alive and well on April, 2, and all the little details of March will be thankfully re-

ceived. George had a few days of feverishnses, partly owing to a long council on a dreadfully hot day, but he is quite well again now. We all look, as all Europeans ought to look, utterly colourless, but rather interesting than otherwise. They say it is curious in the cool season to see people returning to their natural colour. Our very hot season is happily over; last Saturday we had a great deal of rain, and on Sunday a thunder-storm that would have made every separate hair on your excellent little head stand on end. George and I were standing in his verandah, and saw the lightning strike the ground close by my new garden, and there was a crash like that of several regiments firing at once; so we skurried in and shut the windows. There was a powder magazine at Dumdum (the idea of living near Dumdum!) struck that afternoon, and poor Dumdum made such a noise that it would have been glad to be deaf, deaf. Since that day we have had much cooler weather, and can open our shutters after luncheon and see the light of day. This morning I actually got up at half-past five, put on a dressing-gown and shawl, and went out to help Gibson plant my new garden, which will really

be lovely. Dr. Wallich, of the Botanical Garden (a great man in botanical history), has given me seven hundred plants, which would be exotics of great value if we were not acting in that capacity ourselves, and he is come here himself this afternoon to see that they are all put in the right places. The mornings between five and and a quarter past six are really delightful, and it is a pity that getting up early is so fatiguing, which it certainly is. Gibson is going up the country in ten days to collect for the Duke of Devonshire, so he was very anxious to finish my garden first. George came out at six. It was great fun giving a poke at the bottom of a flower-pot and turning out a nice little plant—like Greenwich days, even though the poor little flower was received by twelve black gardeners very lightly dressed. I crept down the back stairs through Wright's room, in the hope of avoiding all my own people, who were asleep at my room door; but I had not been out five minutes before they all came pouring out setting their turbans and sashes. It sometimes strikes me that we Europeans are mad people, sent out here because we are dangerous at home, and that our black keepers are told never to

lose sight of us, and the ingenious creatures never do. But there is something touching in their attentions; though they are so troublesome they humour their patients. One brought me an arm-chair and another a foot-stool, not being up to the mysteries of a dibble and trowel. Another well-judging creature brought a cup of tea. Chance's man came up dandling his black charge, and another fetched up, with great care, my beautiful pet goat, not having the sense to calculate that the goat and the garden would not agree; but they are always thinking of these sort of attentions, and, though it gives one a horrible idea of being constantly watched, it shows they watch to some purpose.

You cannot imagine the interest English politics have again become now we have the debates to read. I am so proud of our ministers. At this distance one sees the thing in an historical point of view, and I cannot help thinking they are a wonderful set of men to have brought the country back to that pitch of prosperity in which it is, and by such hard labour too. People are very liberal in their politics here. They do not know much about the individuals that compose our parties, and are very little

curious about them; but they are all anxious for 'good accounts from England,' and all seem satisfied.

I am so glad you have been scolding Rodwell. The quantities of books that he ought to have sent us by this time! and he has not sent one. We borrowed 'Rienzi' and I find it tiresome; but the others like it.

I wish you would tell —— you have heard from me, if this makes a quick journey. I have written to her *twice* in the last fortnight from mere wantonness, and cannot inflict a third letter on her.

Ever, dearest, yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO A FRIEND.

Barrackpore, Thursday, June 22, 1837.

I see the 'Kyte,' with my last journal to you carefully shipped, is still in the river, and I hope the deceiving captain, who advertised his departure some days ago, will bring up my journal to the present day. Of course he will; he must feel that I should have gone on writing if he had not declared he was sailing,

and, as an honourable man, I trust to him the account of the last five days.

Fanny and I agreed to come up here yesterday, as there have been two, or three thunder-storms, and 'the rains have begun,' as they say here with vast importance. The change of temperature is perfectly delicious, and I love the rains; but I think they are shabby concerns compared to our April showers. They are really not at all better, but they say we have been unlucky in them; but they bring several advantages besides coolness. The grey cloudy sky is such a blessing. We came up in the 'Soonamookie' at three in the afternoon—the first time we have been out at that hour for many months—and we had all the advantage of the black clouds without the rain which they had at Calcutta. We rather speculated on coming up quite alone, as we had taken this extra day; but Major —— and the Doctor thought that would be wrong, and we found them waiting to go with us. Fanny had the headache, but I took Chance and her deer and a volume of Mrs. Hemans, and established myself in the garden, and told all the servants to go and sit down at a little distance, that I

might fancy myself 'alone in the country' and 'sitting out reading,' as if it were the Temple Walk at Eden Farm, or the lawn at Bower Hall, and altogether it *was* rather a pleasant hour; somewhat melancholy and exciting, but the birds made a nice *ramageing* sort of noise, and it was a beautiful mackerel sort of sky (like Juba's sky), and the trees looked happy after the rain, and that dear Mrs. Hemans! I dote on that book. She just said the things I was thinking. I hardly know whether I was thinking the book or reading my thoughts; it all amalgamated so dreamily, and you and Eden Farm, and 'youth and home, and that sweet time' when we were all together and all happy, or unhappy, but still together. All this was floating about me, and I had a considerable mind to cry about it, but then two little paroquets began screaming in a tamarind-tree, and there was a strong perfume of exotic flowers—Indian white blossoms that were dropping on the grass—and then I saw eleven of those white eastern figures whom I had told to sit down, all squatting cross-legged most obediently, but with their black eyes fixed on me, and I scorned to waste any English tears on

such an eastern scene. So I looked at Chance, who was jumping about in the tank, trying to catch a gold-coloured frog, and I thought that he and ourselves were much alike. We are living in a marsh catching *gold* frogs, and then I thought how pleasant it would be if you would just come and sit down and talk over Mrs. Hemans with me. I actually put marks for the particular sentence we should talk over, or that I should like to send to you.

> Look on me *thus*, when hollow praise
> Hath made the weary pine
> For one true tone of other days,
> One glance of love like thine!
> In vain! in vain!

Those lines take my fancy prodigiously. It is so stupid not to have written them first, and I want your 'true tones' dreadfully.

'If my sister were near me now, I should lay my head down upon her shoulder and cry like a tired child. The time of year makes one so long for the far-away.'

'I am reconciling myself to many things in my changed situation, which at first pressed upon my heart with all the weight of a

Switzer's home-sickness. Amongst these is the want of hills. Oh! this waveless horizon.'

What fond, strange yearnings from the soul's deep cell
Gush for the faces we no more shall see!
How are we haunted in the wind's low tone
By voices that are gone!
Looks of familiar love that never more,
Never on earth, our aching eyes shall greet,
Past words of welcome to our household door,
And vanished smiles and sounds of parted feet,
Spring mid the murmurs of thy flowering trees.
Why, why revisit'st thou these?

Good lines! and it was great luck to meet with them at that moment, and I still think this morning it would be a want of confidence not to mention them to you. I made several sage original reflections besides all these quotations — one, that in this relaxing climate, where nobody has any nerves or spirits, it is lucky we can go out so little. 'The common sun, the air, the skies,' are too much for us, they are very *affecting*. Then, that as we must live in the house and in the dark, it was good economy of Providence to make Bengal so hideous. If it were beautiful nobody could see it, and, as it is a frightful plain, it is perhaps advantageous to see so little of it.

Friday, 23rd.

George and —— and Sir Willoughby Cotton, with some of the aides-de-camp, arrived yesterday, and the rain is gone off, and they are all hotter and more miserable than ever here. Not Sir Willoughby nor George. I think the men of that age certainly think and care less, much less, about their personal comforts than the *cabriolet* young men of the present day. I have thought so for some years.

Fanny and I and Major Byrne went out on the elephants. We are trying some new howdahs for the march, and I think I am satisfied with the alterations that have been made in mine, though I could invent something better; but the very best howdah on the very best elephant will, I think, reduce anybody to a shapeless and boneless lump in about six miles of travelling. I expect to walk my march. A palanquin looks like a coffin, the elephant shakes, and I am grown afraid of my horse. The carriages go with us, but there are few roads on which they can be used. I have had a long letter from Miss Fane, giving such a beautiful account of Simlah.

Saturday, 24th.

We dragged one of the tanks yesterday, because the fish are all dying for want of water, and the native servants begged hard for some fish; all their food is so dear. It is always a pretty sight. There were at least 200 of them crowding round, and Mars and Giles and Webb (the coachman) trying, by the help of chokey-dars (the Government House policemen), to keep some order in the distribution. The fish are enormous; many of them weighed more than twenty pounds. Major Byrne and I went and surveyed the stores, and the beds, and the tables for our tents. It is an awful job to undertake, I should think, for those that have the trouble of it. Jones and Wright are just to go in our palanquins when we are on the elephants, and to change when we want to change. Major Byrne thinks it much the best plan. Giles and Mars will have ponies, and, as we only travel ten miles a day, it cannot hurt them. St. Cloud is so important to our happiness, that we shall all join to carry him on a queen's cushion if he insists on it, and he has a palanquin.

We have had two such storms to-day and

yesterday, which have flooded the whole park; and though they have prevented our going out, yet they make the temperature very nice and cool.

Sunday, 25th.

A good sermon from Mr.——, and in the afternoon a remarkably pleasant surprise. George got a despatch from the India House while I was sitting in his room with *one* newspaper of the 14th of March. The despatch, as usual, contained comments on the King of Oude, and the *Ameers*, and the Putiallah Rajah, and the salt duties. The most interesting sentence was an intimation that we should have a new dinner service in due time. But this professed to be the sole result of the steamer whose progress we have been watching with intense interest. Then came on another thundering storm, and our Sunday afternoon was assuming a gloomy appearance, when one of the excellent guards came galloping through the rain with a second packet, sent express—the repentance and after-thought of the steamer—and I received your long letter of March 4, with several others; so this gave quite another

turn to the afternoon, and kept us in reading till dinner-time.

Never mind what people tell you about the books you send. The last set that came by the 'A. Robertson' are our chief occupation; now Lady M. Montagu and Mrs. Hemans have given one a very pleasant week, and I have not even wished to begin any of the novels. These good supplies of books you have sent us lately have made a material difference in my life. In the number of lonely hours here a want of books is such a misfortune. The *very* trashy novels of the day we do not care much about, but any by good authors, or those that you have read and liked yourself are very acceptable. I wish you would say more about the 'Pickwicks;' we are all so fond of them. Are we wrong?

Calcutta, Monday, 26th.

We had another frightful storm yesterday at Barrackpore, and I retract my contemptuous opinion of the tropical storms; and at dinner we had the same attack of white ants we had one day last year, only worse. They drove us out of the dining-room into the dark, but soon spread all over the house, and we had at last to

set off in the rain for Calcutta. The dining-room is larger than Willis's Room at Almack's, and I am not exaggerating when I say that there was not a place in it where we could step without crushing twenty of these creatures, which are much larger than common flies. They shake off their wings after they have been five minutes in the house, and all the white marble tables were quite brown and covered some depth with these discarded wings. We have only seen this twice, but it has made me believe all the odd stories about ants that Mrs. Carmichael told in her book on the West Indies.

Tuesday, 27th.

We had our dinner at the Bishop's yesterday; he is such a good-natured old man; it is impossible not to like him. He had asked all his other guests at half-past seven, and we were to come at eight, and he had been sitting, they said, half-an-hour downstairs, for fear of not meeting George on the steps. He asked fifty-four people into a room that was meant to hold forty, but luckily it was a cool, rainy evening, and his dinner and establishment were much better than any I have seen.

We are all in a horrid way about the ice, which oozed out yesterday; and no signs of an American ship; and the water we drink would make very good tea as far as warmth goes, but the Bishop had persuaded the ice managers to give him the last little scrapings of ice, on the plea of our dining there.

The Bishop showed us his house after dinner. He has got the best library in India, and I borrowed some good books from him.

Barrackpore (?), Tuesday, July 4.

We had only a small dinner yesterday, for a wonder; but we are very *forward* in our lessons, and then, in this absence of ice, great dinners are so bad. Everything flops about in the dishes, and the wine and water is so hot, and a shocking thing is that a great ship was seen bottom upwards at the mouth of the river, supposed to be an American, and consequently the ice-ship.

We had again immense quantities of visitors this morning, and I came up after luncheon to this place in the 'Soonamookie.' We have made several nice cabins in the boat; and I took possession of mine; and one of the excellent domestics took a great hand-punkah—things

that stand on the ground, and which they twirl round after a fashion of their own, and it gives more air than anything—and I enjoyed a remarkably pleasant slumber, which nothing disturbed but the fact that little —— tumbled down on his nose, or over it, or something, and very naturally cried for half-an-hour.

Yours affectionately,

E. EDEN.

TO THE HON. AND REV. ROBERT EDEN.

Barrackpore, July 17, 1837.

MY DEAREST ROBERT,—Yesterday was one of our grand festival days—a large arrival of English letters. I had ten for my own share.

Grindlay deserves to be made a peer for the cleverness with which he contrives that every ship shall bring something. In consequence I watch the semaphore at the fort, twiddling its great wooden arms about, with double interest, because though it may announce only a ship from Penang or Singapore, yet it may signalise an English ship, in which case we are sure of something interesting; and if I could find anything worth dear Grindlay's acceptance, I would send it to him.

You have no idea what a good day a handsome packet of English letters makes. Yesterday, in the morning paper, they mentioned that an English ship was in sight at Diamond. That made a cheerful breakfast. The dawk, as the ignorant *creturs* call the post, comes in about half-past one at Barrackpore; so about that time I established myself and book in his Excellency's room while he was writing, and kept an eye on the door; and when the nazir, George's head servant and a thorough picture of 'a gentle Hindu,' came in with a placid smile on his good-looking countenance, I guessed he had something better to give than a common official box. Then there was the fun of breaking open Grindlay's large packages, and sorting the contents, and distributing them about the house; and, as luncheon was announced, I would not open any of my letters, but kept them till I could return to my own room and enjoy them at my leisure. And when anybody comes to an interesting bit of news, there is a scuffling about the house, or screams of 'Qui hi?' and somebody comes and carries off the precious epistle, and takes it to the Lord Sahib, or the Lady Sahib, as occasion may be. But yesterday was a rainy

day—not rain such as you see, but a constant sheet of water pouring down—so for exercise we carried about our respective letters to each other's rooms, and talked them over, and the mere reading took up two or three hours.

Your account of the snow being 'congealed water and cold to the touch' I read aloud, for the benefit of the public.

I think the native female schools will do good at last, but we attended the report last Wednesday that was made of them, and there was a great deal in the report that I cannot believe. The native girls are married always at seven or eight years old, and after that are shut up and seen no more; and this report mentioned little girls of six years old, who came to school in defiance of their fathers' orders, and who concealed their Testaments between their mats and beds, because their parents forbade them to have them, like little Christian martyrs and great examples. I asked the clergyman afterwards whether he thought a native child of that age, who has not the sense of an English child of three years old, was really disobeying her parents from religious motives, and whether it was right to teach them deceit under any

circumstances, and he said no; he had been sorry to hear it. There was a sale afterwards for the benefit of the school, at which we spent with great difficulty one hundred and fifty rupees (about 15*l.*), and had to bring George his money home again, as we could find nothing to buy.

I do so long to see you all. Sometimes it feels like a bad illness, and I hate all the people here in consequence. That is a symptom of the complaint.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Government House, July 18, 1837.

As usual, dearest, your No. Eleven followed No. Ten, just as it ought, three weeks after. I wish you would send your Board of Admiralty to instruct our Board of Admiralty, who send their ships without regard to the date of our letters.

To be sure I can get you a stone, or stones for 20*l.* which will be worth having if I take my time about it. In three months we make what Lord M—— would call 'our progress'

up the country, and Delhi is the place for precious-stone merchants, who all come flocking to the camp. There are all sorts of curiosities to be found there, and, in fact, none here except at five times their worth; so I will wait to spend your substance till I get there.

My dear, the King of Oude is dead! I think I see you start, and at once embrace all the political importance of such an event. Then, rousing yourself from mightier thoughts, you will rush to order your Court mourning. We talk of it mysteriously, because we talk of all Indian affairs mysteriously. We almost think it indiscreet of any public character to do so public a thing as to die; and we have been in a state of the highest indignation because our old Begum, evidently a superior woman, seeing the throne empty and comfortable-looking, seated herself and a little adopted boy upon it, and there reigned for half an hour, when we, in our usual despotic manner, went and took her off, and, an enemy says, plundered the throne of its jewels. This is formally denied, but to-day being Tuesday, when people come to see us in the evening, I expect to see George and the members of the Council appear with

diamonds and pearls stitched on their coats instead of buttons.

We have found out a remarkably harmless old man, whom we call the right heir, and have seated him on the throne. If he will do all we tell him, he will probably be allowed to reign as despotically as he pleases.

What a country we live in! And what a tragedy might have taken place in my room two nights ago! There is a little lory sleeps in my dressing-room on a stand. It is only inferior in merit to the lamented feathered angel for whom you and Lord —— are trying to concoct a name. It is not his habit to scream, and he woke me by screaming supernaturally. My gazelle bounded against the mosquito-house, and an opaque body jumped out of the window. Such a situation! Gazelle stamped about for the remainder of the night, and my lory had lost twenty feathers, for the ayah counted them and would not be comforted. Ever since, the house has been haunted day and night by a monkey. There is no peace, no safety. The sentinels are baffled, for it comes in at the windows. An aide-de-camp is woke by finding it dancing at the foot of his bed,

another by hearing him chattering by the side of it. It has broken some of my china cups and has carried off bodily our little French servant's large green parrot; that makes me shudder for my lory. Unless the monkey can be caught or killed, George must abdicate and go home; life is not worth having on such terms.

Yours affectionately,
F. H. EDEN.

FROM THE HON. E. EDEN TO ——.

'Enterprise' Steamer, Friday, August 6, 1837.

I wrote to Mr. —— yesterday by the overland mail, and therefore you will probably know two months before you receive this that, finding I could not quite get rid of the remains of that fever I had three weeks ago, and being tired of bad nights and hot hands and living in my own room, I look to the real Indian cure of going down to the Sandheads, and though I am only thirty miles from Calcutta, yet I declare I think I feel better—'a little peckish or so' and not so hot. This sort of fever has been in every house in Calcutta and Barrackpore. They

say it was nearly as bad last rainy season, only that we did not think about it, as it was our first year and we had our English healths. Poor innocents! but it is worse this year from the rain having failed. The air is so hot and steamy and the tanks do not fill, so that the atmosphere is muddy and bad, and altogether it has been much like an influenza in London, only that people here have no strength to lose, and whatever they do lose they never regain. George breakfasted with me at half-past six this morning, and, as I had not seen him for some time at that early hour, I could not help looking with astonishment at his fresh colour and real healthy appearance. He grows tired and pale after writing through a whole hot day, but the animal itself is apparently better than ever. I wish we all had half his health to divide amongst us.

Saturday, 7th.

We came to anchor at Kedgeree at half-past five yesterday, and the water was very smooth and the air delicious on deck, but the cabins were so hot at night, after the large rooms and the punkah at home, that I could not sleep a bit. Dr. Drummond has given me up his cabin, and

the captain has obligingly sawed away the partition between that and mine, which gives me a little draft. We went down to Saugur—actually into blue sea-water—in the morning, whereby I and all the native servants were remarkably sea-sick; so then we turned back again and anchored at Kedgeree. Kedgeree is a pretty place—about two inches of bank, then a little jungle and an old ruin of a house that a former postmaster lived in, a little thatched bungalow which the present less well-paid man inhabits, a flag-staff which acts as a semaphore, and then a few native huts. Mrs. Rousseau, the postmistress, sent me a basket of fruit and vegetables. I wish she would come herself, as she must want to see another European woman. I suspect her husband must be the original Rousseau. It is just the place he would have chosen to live in—utterly out of the reach of human kind. If he and his wife happen to dislike each other, it must be a delightful position to be in.

We breakfast at eight, lunch at twelve, and dine at four (a new set of hours); but I only appear at dinner. The captain is very hospitable and good-humoured.

Wednesday, 9th.

We went down beyond Saugur yesterday. It was really cold enough on deck to be glad of a shawl, and Dr. Drummond would not let me go to sleep there for fear of a *chill*. I wonder what we should have thought of it in England. The thermometer was at 84°, but that is very low at this time of year, and there is no sun and such nice dry salt air. It sometimes seems such an odd bit of life when we are anchored opposite Kedgeree. We three and Mr. Dorin play at cards in the evening on deck, and it ought to do good to be out as I have been every day seven hours in real blowing air. We met four ships coming in yesterday — one the 'Wolf,' commanded by ——'s cousin, and he went on board for five minutes; and in the evening another Madras ship anchored close by us, and I persuaded him and Dr. Drummond to go on board to see if they could find any curious birds or beasts or anything to buy; but they could not— nothing but a Newfoundland dog, a very rare animal in this country, and Mr. ——, the extra provisional member of Council.

Fanny has begun with this epidemic, but

slightly, she says. George finds that turtle-soup and port-wine are great preservatives.

Friday, 11th.

We have settled to go home to-morrow, as I shall then have had nine days' of it, and my nights are so bad here I cannot sleep at all. We came up to Diamond Harbour this evening.

Calcutta, Sunday, 13th.

We have seen the last of our dear open carriage till we get to Benares. It is gone to be lined and painted, and is to embark, with many others of our goods and half the servants, in a fortnight; so George and I went in the great coach. As it is almost all glass, and all the glasses let down, it is, in fact, an open carriage, only it feels like the Lord Mayor's. Anything is better than the job-carriages here; they jingle and shake like taxed carts.

Monday, 14th.

I should say we are all very well again, but we have got off our party to-morrow night in consideration of an immense ball for the King's birthday, which we give on Monday with supper for 900 people (bless me!)—our last large

Calcutta party, as half the servants will go towards Benares in about a fortnight. George, in his frisky way, went to the play to-night. There are no punkahs in the theatre, and not a breath of air. Fanny and I took a drive by the beautiful moonlight.

Have you read Mrs. ——'s book? I have a horrid suspicion it is the sort of book *you* may like, and I cannot bear it. I cannot bear any book (except 'Law's Serious Call') where people are called Atticus and Amanda and Fritilla, or words to that effect. Altogether it is so tiresome it is quite irritating. I borrowed several books from Mr. Macaulay for my expedition and read them all through, and feel better informed than usual this week. Mrs. Elliot has sent George such a beautiful cabinet. He told her to buy an eligible article whenever she liked it, but he never could have foreseen such a piece of luck as this. It is about the size of a small wardrobe, with shelves, and drawers, and desks, and the most beautiful style of lacker-work, and cost only 10*l.* I gave her a commission for a shawl, and she has sent two absolute masses of embroidery, and so beautiful that George will insist on having one of them.

Wednesday, 16th.

I must put this up to-day, as the 'Bengal' and 'Adelaide' both sail to-morrow, and then there will be a cessation of opportunity for a little while. This is a bad time of year for us; the ships from England make such long passages, and there are, moreover, not many due. In about a month we shall be beginning to fidget for the arrival of our Simlah boxes, for we shall not pick up any clothes here. It was announced yesterday by the milliner that there was not another yard of satin of any colour whatever in Calcutta, except a small remnant, possessed by a mad German, of white satin for shoes. Miss —— is to marry without a trousseau, which is to be made when the French ships arrive. I always like these little colonial distresses.

God bless you, my dearest ——! This leaves us all quite well and our influenza done in answer to yours. This has been an idle month in the writing line; so, if you hear anybody complain, you must say touchingly, 'Ah, poor thing! she has not been well.'

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO THE HON. AND REV. R. EDEN.

Barrackpore, August 18, 1837.

MY DEAREST ROBERT,—I ought to be writing to you, but somehow you always seem to be George's property in the writing way, and he really has such limited means in that line that it is robbing the poor, apparently, to interfere with him. We are going to send home soon a quantity of things—I may say a ship-load of goods. I cannot think what you are to do with them. Build eight houses for your children and furnish them handsomely, and then take the chance of our not coming home. But most of these things had better be made over in their packing cases to that shady retreat under the gallery at Lansdowne House, which Lord L—— proffered us. There are some Chinese folding screens, a Chinese table, a Chinese cabinet—all bulky articles—besides various smaller articles of furniture. We shall have so many Chinese things that I am beginning to make myself harmonise with the house. I have already achieved a yellow parchment complexion of great merit, and can make a

handsome plait of long hair; therefore my great care is to pinch my eyes up in the corners and flatten my nose, and, if that can be achieved, there will be something very attractive in the general appearance of Chang Foo Cottage, Knightsbridge. I know I shall be fined or imprisoned before I leave this, for snipping off by irresistible impulse the long plait of hair our Chinese shoemaker wears. It touches the ground, and one snip would have it off. Perhaps I may do it the very last thing, and scuttle off to the ship instantly with it, as my last trophy.

We should not send home all our furniture so soon, but we shall be away from Calcutta a year and a half, and that is quite enough in this country to injure anything that is not daily looked after and aired and wiped and cleaned; but they say that, left in Government House merely to the care of a few natives, the insects and the damp would have destroyed every item before our return. —— is selling off all his goods, books, arms, horses, curiosities, &c., all to be sold on Thursday; indeed, the newspaper is full of the results of our move. 'To be sold, the property of Capt. ——, proceeding

to the Upper Provinces with the "Governor-General;"' then 'the property of Mr. ——,' 'the property of the Rev. C. ——, &c. &c. I should hate that part of an Indian life. People are always changing their stations, and at every change they sell off everything, because there are no stages, waggons, or canals by which even a chair can be transported from one place to another, and it is not everybody who can afford a man's head on which to carry it.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Government House, August 18, 1837.

——, I've got your No. 15; as usual it dropped in in an odd unexpected manner. It could not have come in a ship, for there was not one in the river; nothing else came but a packet from the 'Company.' Perhaps, after all, *you* are the 'Company.' We have all been busy during the rainy-season fever—all but his 'Excellency,' who is atrociously and inhumanly well—for the whole of Calcutta has been sick. We don't die of our influenzas, because we

have not strength enough; we are only left a shade weaker and a shade yellower, and if a healthy European lands it makes us all sneeze. B—— has escaped it, owing to his great serenity and being constantly engaged in plucking *ahingas*. I have another bunch of feathers for you, and some day I'll freight a ship with them.

Our first and best energies are devoted towards making a *clinquant* figure of his Excellency, in order that he may shine in the eyes of the native princes; and I take it he will make a pretty considerable figure seen through a long vista of embroidered punkahs, peacocks' feathers, silver sticks, spearmen, &c., and two interesting females caracoling on their elephants on each side of him.

I have at last made —— listen to reason about my howdah, and it is a model of comfort. There have been unpleasant doings at Napâl—very! They make me rather sick. The physician there was suspected of having poisoned a little prince, intending to poison the queen. He would not own to any such intention, upon which the king took his wife and children and tortured them to make him con-

fess—scorched them. Of course the man did confess at last; indeed, I should like to see George and —— *not* confess anything and everything if they took to scorching Emily and me. It is a very bad precedent that of torturing the women of a family by way of punishing the men. It might just happen they would not mind, certainly less than if they were tortured themselves. One of the native princes made his prime minister pound his family's heads in a mortar with a pestle. I should not object to that so much if he set about it judgematically.

It sometimes strikes me we really *are* in what is called a barbarous country. The other day the *baboo* died here—a very high caste servant, through whose hands great sums of money pass. He might have been saved, but would not degrade himself by taking English nourishment, and, being a Hindu, was at last carried off by his attached friends before he was dead and laid by the side of the river, where they poked mud into his mouth, and there was no choice for us but to let him be murdered in his own way.

Yours most affectionately,

F. H. E.

FROM THE HON. E. EDEN TO THE COUNTESS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Barrackpore, September 3, 1837.

MY DEAREST SISTER,—I do not know when I wrote to you last, but it can do no harm writing again, and George asserts that *this* overland packet is a sure conveyance. I own I have a high opinion of 'Overland' himself just at this moment. On August 31 I had a letter from Robert and one from Frederic Grey, dated July 1; so, you know, it was just lawful to talk of a letter written *last month* from England. Curious; but the contents of those letters! What with intense interest in the novel of 'The Young Queen,' and political triumph, and hopelessness of finding any black bombazine for the old King, and eagerness about the elections, and the dearth of love-ribbon in the China Bazaar, and satisfaction with the Queen's choice of ladies, and a wish to be there and to know all about it, I don't think I have felt so much excitement since we came out. And then, though one never, by accident even, judges rightly, it does seem as if this change were everything for our ministry.

Then the beginning of that young creature's life is like the first vol. of the very best novel I ever read. The accounts of her proclamation almost made me cry. I am sorry for the old King too; he was a kind-hearted, good old man, and we mean to wear the deepest mourning for him, which in the month of September is a proof of devotion unsurpassed by anything I have ever met with in history; but, independent of respect for him, I think it a great shame amongst these millions of natives, who have a mysterious awe of kings, not to show proper regard for ours. Rosina told Wright to get her a black petticoat, as she had seen 'my great Bashaw' in his gold carriage when she was at the Admiralty. He was going to prorogue Parliament. She will be a good figure in a black petticoat with her scarlet and white veil. As I told you there is no bombazine in the market, and we could not wear it if there were this month; but I have trimmed a trashy, disrespectful silk with a whole width of black crape, which gives an idea of extreme grief, and, with no petticoats under, it is not so extremely hot.

Our journey up the country had a shocking

shake for about a fortnight. The Burmese chose to have a 'belle semaine' and to depose one mad king and choose a madder, and he seemed so inclined to be troublesome that all the people in authority thought George could not be out of the way; but things are subsiding now, and I have luckily never been very strong since my fever, and 'change of air,' you know, is so desirable, and altogether our prospects are mending.

September 7.

The overland packet is not to go till the 10th. Prospects decidedly better. Three boat-loads actually gone. Chaplain and lady embarking to-day; our carriages and the band actually packing. My health much better; indeed, I shall soon allow George to think I am quite well, which hitherto would have been the height of imprudence, but he is taking to like the thought of the journey himself. The only drawback to it is the fear that George and Chance may suffer by it merely from the circumstance that Bengal agrees with them so well, and I hold that a constitution adapted to Bengal can hardly be adapted to any other

climate under heaven. I wish this horrid September were over. I am glad I have not a young daughter at home coming out to me. It would be morally wrong in the first place that I should have such an article, but I should be particularly sorry on her account.

God bless you, my dearest sister!

This is put up this 9th September, at which date we are all alive, much to our credit.

I certainly should like to see you now and every day.

Your most affectionate

E. E.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Government House, September 17, 1837.

——, —There are no ships going, so it is a perfect farce to begin a letter to you; and a great English ship which was reported at the mouth of the river a week ago, everybody says in a melancholy tone, has got into the eastern channel, as if in this part of the world it could get into any other channel. Nevertheless, the grand result is its total disappearance. I dare say it is dead of the cholera.

However, we are doing—I may almost say we

have done—our grief for the King, and are stamping rupees with Victoria's head on them. That is a great national measure on the occasion, and I heard the mint man acutely remark, 'Now I wish we had never changed the stamp; I should not wonder if the natives were to mistrust a coin with nothing but a woman's head on it.' We should naturally be living under William IV. if the last overland despatch had not reached us in less than two months, and that makes us very precocious in our English knowledge.

We are on the brink of going up the country. We expect to set off about this day five weeks, and B—— is doing what may be called pulling our chairs from under us in the most ruthless manner. Horses, carriages, servants, howdahs, all our small comforts, are to be sent on to-morrow to Benares, where, I believe, our camp is to be formed; for, as we are to be towed there by a steamer, they will be some weeks longer going. I don't think you have been here for the last two or three days, and you might as well have come this morning. I have found it utterly impossible to settle to anything, even to write this letter.

The servants have all got their state livery given them to-day; an immense amount is expended on scarlet and gold to show our sense and grandeur to the natives up the country. I had just begun to write, when I heard a great movement on the staircase leading to my rooms, and then the old *khansamah* walked in with a considerable body of followers. He has lived here for fifty years, and is a fine old man, with a long white beard, and rules us all. He was in a transport of vanity with his dress, which *is* perfectly beautiful, both turban and tunic. He talks English, and did the honours of himself in this way: 'I come with my *kitmutgars* and *chôwkeydars* to make salaam to Ladysheep. My dress very beautiful; I got gold lace here and there, and have a crown and stars on shoulders, which nobody else has. *Chowkeydars* one row gold lace more than *kitmutgars*, but all less than me.' I expressed my profound admiration, and then they all beat their foreheads and walked out. Ten minutes after there was another movement, and the nazir, who is George's head man, walked in with his twenty hurkarus, who answer to our footmen. He reads and writes English, and

admired himself in the most polished language. 'I doing my best to keep up with him,' and then he and all his followers salaamed. Then Emily's and my jemadars, with our hurkarus; Ariff was excessively grand indeed. Then came the *sirdar* with all his followers, the men who carry the palankeens and pull our punkahs; then the *musalchees*, who have the charge of lighting the house, and so on to five processions more, classes of people whose existence I had never heard of, all equally proud of their appearance. Last came the most degraded caste of all, the *mihturs*, or people who sweep out the rooms. None of the other servants would take anything from their hands, and, in compliment to that feeling, they all had different dresses of dark purple. This shocked me, so I made a point of admiring these dresses, more particularly as their head man, as if in mockery of himself, brought in Chance wearing a little gold coat. No high caste servant will touch a dog.

I am in a shocking way about Gazelle. He has become more attractive and more exclusively attached than ever; but he has grown enormously, too large for anyone to carry, even

if he did not in the most shocking manner kick any servant who ventures to come near him, and, as he will follow no one but me, I cannot imagine how his march of some thousand miles is to be accomplished. B—— has forsaken me in my utmost need, shaking his head ominously and saying that Gazelle will certainly die during the first week. That lowers B—— in my eyes; I did think he would have offered him half his palankeen.

If you want a diamond three quarters of an inch in diameter tell me. W—— has just brought me a ring to look at, with a single diamond of that size; and, because it has an imperceptible flaw in it, the jewellers say it is only worth 1,600*l.* I offered them your 20*l.* for it, but they would not take it. I have begged to have sentinels placed over me and it till it is fetched back again.

Dr. Drummond says that a few days ago his friend Dr. G—— found an adjutant which was so heavy it could not fly. In their horrid surgical way they killed it, and, on opening it, they found it had swallowed a baby. In the most dawdling way these birds manage to suck down live cats, rats, and crows without any

apparent effort; but to swallow a body is rather strange. In some countries the bird would have been tried for murder; here nobody but a doctor would dare to kill one.

Yours most affectionately,

F. H. EDEN.

FROM THE HON. E. EDEN TO THE COUNTESS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Government House, October 3.

MY DEAREST SISTER,—We are in the Slough of Despond—the absolute morass—I may say the quaking bog of despond. After having watched the career of the 'Seringapatam' with the most intense interest, congratulated ourselves on her early arrival at Madras, pitied ourselves on her long passage to Saugur; plagued the heart out of agents, who were going off for their Doorgak Pooja holiday; obtained an order from the Custom House (which is shut for the same reason) that our boxes might pass; and now the ship is come in, and not only is there no box for us, except a box of seltzer-water, but she has not brought us a single English letter! I still think that captain of the 'Seringapatam' has secreted our

goods and read our letters, and that he will repent in a day or two; but he declares not. I could bear the disappointment about the clothes pretty well, because I am rather incredulous about the extreme cold with which they threaten us; I found out that trick last January; but I should have liked a letter.

October 9.

I wrote that four days ago, believing all the time that the 'Seringapatam' really had some letters on board for us, and that, after grumbling a great deal, we should be pleasantly disappointed with a large packet of letters and a superb assortment of dresses; but none have come.

Wednesday, October 10.

This has a chance of overtaking the 'Reliance.' At last we have heard of our things. An officer who went on board the 'Seringapatam' in search of his wife's goods saw in a list of parcels 'Two boxes for the Miss Edens.' So now the captain promises to make a search for them, and I should think there will be letters in them.

God bless you, my dearest sister! In ten

days more we shall be on board on our way to a better climate. Good-bye.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO THE HON MRS. EDEN.

Government House, Tuesday, October 17, 1837.

MY DEAREST MARY,—I think I will run you off a line before we start on our great journey, though I am greatly distressed for time. I know I shall never be ready by Saturday. It is such a bore not being able to leave anything to take care of itself. It makes such a tinning and soldering and knocking, and the ivory things are to be wrapped in flannel, and the carved Chinese things dipped in corrosive sublimate, and the silver things wrapped in paper; and when all this is done and they are carefully tinned, they say we shall, on our return, find the ivory yellow, the wood a heap of dust, and the silver quite black. My books I have sent to General ——, to be daily dusted and dried, with a clever afterthought if anything happens to him (a real Indian thought), that Captain —— is his heir, and my books will not be sold off by auction

till the aide-de-camp comes back; and he cannot leave us. It is melancholy to see a week after the death of a head of a family everything advertised for sale. They won't keep, and there are no shops to send them to.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Government House, October 16, 1837.

——, I must thank you myself (how do I know Fanny is to be trusted with thanks?) for your extreme kindness in sending me those two pretty muslins. It was so like you. I am still more pleased with the gowns. They came in such a nohow, unexpected sort of way, that is particularly pleasant at this distance from home. I hope, by a strict adherence to that wretched fashion of tight sleeves, to be able to spare enough of each pattern for a new *douillette* for that little darling whom you always remember with so much affection—that little angel Chance.

His servant informs me that he wants two new coats; he has one of Chinese brocade, with a gold breastplate, which was presented to him

last year; but that he can only wear when he goes to visit the King of Oude's or the King of Lucknow's dogs. For his days of common Pariah audiences I should think a coloured muslin must be correct.

I was shocked the other day by hearing that his servant, Jimmund, had given him warning on going up the country. At first I thought Chance had grown into the European custom of striking his servants, as his dear little temper is not entirely without its imperfections; still I thought him too much of a gentleman to give way to such an abominable practice. So I made no enquiries, but begged another servant might be engaged for the march. Then the whole story turned out to be a mistake. Jimmund came into my room with Chance under his arm, his hands clasped, and he vociferating a great many of those odd sounds the natives are so good as to call their language. My jemadar stood by, translating it literally, and I thought it very pretty. 'He say no such bad thought enter the head of Ladyship's servant; his enemies say it for him. He say Chance is the child of his house, and good luck has come to his house with him. He say it is

his duty to take care of any dog of Ladyship's, but he love Chance with his heart. And he say Ladyship is his father and mother, and may do what she like with him, but he likes to keep the dog.'

Major B—— says that that is a very literal translation, and I thought immediately that you would like to hear such an oration in favour of Chance, and that you would not for an instant imagine that the extra rupees Jimmund receives for his care of him could influence him in the slightest degree.

In a few days we depart on our travels; I expect they will be very amusing. And now many thanks.

Your most affectionate,

E. E.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Government House, October 17, 1837.

MY DEAREST ——, —We have not got a bit of a letter, but all your gowns. Lovely articles! and how good of you to send them, dear! and yet what a shame to send such a number! and then again how very useful they will be going up the country (we set off in four days)! and to think of you sending not

out his dinner. The moral is that for the future the dinner to come up by land. We asked most of our visitors to-day what they could have given us if we had sent to them, and, except one piece of cold beef, they said there was nothing. The natives, you know, will not touch what has been on an European table; so that the remains of dinner are always thrown away, except where, as in our kitchen, there are Portuguese who eat it.

Calcutta, Monday, 7th.

We came back last night.

We have some stables half-way, where there is a house given as a sort of retreat to some half-pay sergeant. Sergeant Taylor comes out to assist at the change of our horses; and he has a frightful little half-caste girl, who also goes pottering about telling the syces what to do. I took her a frock and a sash last night, and never saw anybody so pleased, or so ugly. The half-castes dress in such an odd way. I shall be curious to see the frock made up next time.

We had an immense dinner to-day, and such a dull one.

Tuesday, 8th.

At last there is some news from China, but shockingly meagre and disappointing. A sort of blockade was established at Canton without knocking down any of the forts or doing anything that the Chinese would care about. Most of the fleet then went on to Chusan, to be out of the latitude of typhoons. To add to the flatness of all this the 'Conway' went on with the convoy to that eternal Chusan without coming within sight of land, so that there is no letter from ——. However, we heard that he was quite well.

Friday, 11th.

The Canton papers say that the Chinese have been poisoning the tea for our sailors, but that somehow the poisoned tea was taken by their own junks and drunk by themselves. There happens to be no truth in the story, but it is like a Chinese story. I feel a little pain in my stomach when I look at my tea now, and I advise you to taste yours gently.

Saturday, 12th.

Captain —— is still ailing from the fever he had during the war, and is gone down to the

Sandheads for a week, and has taken Chance with him, partly because Chance is his chief amusement in life, and then that he (Chance) has got an old physicky cough, which is, in fact, old age; but we say change of air will be good for it. Jimmund signified to me that he had no objection to Chance's going with Captain ——, provided he went too, but 'that he could not let him go alone.' I think Jimmund, who has never been out of the river, will come back with some new ideas on the subject of sea-sickness, and will let Chance take care of himself another time.

Sunday, 13th.

This must go. Good-bye. Love to all. We are all quite well; I should say remarkably well.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Calcutta, Wednesday, September 27.

We had a very gay dance last night. I do not know what possessed the people; all the grandfathers and grandmothers danced as hard as

they could; the great hall was quite full of people, and yet at one time nearly everybody was dancing.

Monday, October 2.

There is the July overland with your two letters to me. A great deal of public news in the warlike way, and it looks horribly as if our dear Overland were to be interfered with. I think if the Pacha is anything of a gentleman, he will not interfere with our letters; I am sure you and I never did him any harm, and it is a bore that our personal comfort should be interfered with by that sort of uninteresting war. I don't care about Egypt, do you? and I always take the Pacha and the Sultan to be the same man, and if they are not, I do not know which belongs to what, and Egypt is altogether sandy, and sphinxy, and tiresome, and if Waghorne is not to be king of it I do not care what happens.

Saturday, 7th.

Mrs. —— brought her boys yesterday to see Freddy. He walked round R—— just as we should round an elephant. 'Oh! so

large boy; can he say English?' Which was a natural curiosity, as little Miss —— was here the day before, and speaks nothing but Hindustani, and Freddy speaks chiefly Portuguese to his Chinese servant, who could not communicate with Missy's bearer; so the visit was a total failure.

There are two great ships arriving, the 'Owen Glendower' and the 'Seringapatam,' both of June; surely my box must be in one of them.

Sunday, 8th.

At last some Chinese news. Our fleet had taken the island of Chusan, and made Colonel Burrell governor thereof; also knocked down the forts at Amoy, which had fired on a flag of truce. The admiral arrived a day after Chusan was taken, and unluckily his ship, the 'Melville,' ran on a rock going in, and knocked a great hole in her bottom, which is unluckily at an obscure Chinese island, where dockyards are not plentiful. The news all comes by Canton newspapers, the 'Kitty,' which is bringing the despatches, not having yet appeared.

Wednesday, 11th.

We had a fine ball last night, but this morning a greater surprise. The 'Childers,' a Queen's ship from Singapore, was semaphored us yesterday, and this morning we heard that —— was come in her. She came up the river with a steamer, and was here by eleven o'clock. —— is looking uncommonly well, and gives a very good account of Chusan—beautiful scenery, beautiful climate, &c., and the Chinese all returning to their houses; the bazaar open and plenty of provisions coming in. In fact, the lower orders of Chinese would be glad of English protection from the tyranny of their own mandarins.

Wednesday, 14th.

I think I did not mention a disaster that had befallen a party in Upper Scinde under a Major ——, who was going to relieve a Captain Brown, in garrison in a small fort called Kalum. They marched in the great heats, lost their way, found no water, and were attacked when they were mad with thirst by an immense party of Beloochees, and were almost all cut to pieces. It is a bad story altogether, and poor

Captain Brown and his little garrison were given up for lost, as all communication was cut off, and in fact troops cannot live in this country with the thermometer at 130°. But George had a letter yesterday written by him, which some native has conveyed to Bombay, in which he says he knew all succour was cut off, but he did not at all despair. He could make out a scanty allowance of food for another month, 'and then, if nothing better offers, small parties have cut their way through large ones, and I think we may.' In the meanwhile he had piled up large sacks full of gravel, which were to be shown off to one of the Beloochee chiefs who was coming to treat with him as bags of grain. It was a very striking letter, and I always hope that a man with so much spirit will contrive to get off.

Thursday, 15th.

We are going up to Barrackpore this evening, and, as to-morrow is the lawful post day, I may as well send this off now.

We are all quite well. Love to all.

Ever yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO A FRIEND.

Calcutta, Monday, October 19.

We had three very nice days at Barrackpore last week. The weather has grown so much cooler that, except for about two hours, it is not very hot in the house. We had two of the officers of the 'Childers' there, which is always a treat to them.

Tuesday, 20th.

That Captain Brown who was, I told you, left in a perilous state, shut up in a fort in Scinde, without much food and no chance of help, has contrived to escape with his party. I am so glad. It was such a horrid prospect to be starved out by these Beloochees and then cut to pieces, and he was so spirited about it. He does not even say how he managed it, but only writes a line to say he has reached our territories safely.

Tuesday, November 10.

This was the great launch day; luckily very cool, high water at two, everybody in time, all

with the smartest dresses, a collation for three hundred, the band playing, the river covered with boats, guns loaded, flags flying; nothing could be more successful, except that the ship positively refused to be launched. I think she must have been chilly and was afraid of the water. She was on a nice slope—nothing to stop her—hundreds of people working away with screws and levers and ropes; but she would not stir, and the tide, which went upon the old foolish rule of waiting for no one, turned, and so we all came back as wise as we went.

Wednesday 11th.

Manockjee Rustomjee (don't you think our friends have very distinguished names?) came this morning to say they wanted to try that obstinate ship once more, because, if she is not launched to-day, she must wait for some tide a month hence, and that he believed christening could be done by proxy. So —— very good-naturedly offered to go again in the broad glare for me, and set off with Captains Mackintosh and Hill, and when they had got half way they heard a great shouting and firing and met various Parsees rushing distractedly to stop them;

and it appears the dear ship all of a sudden slid into the water of her own accord; nobody near her to help. I like that ship; she will take her own way so quietly. The ball at night was at Rustomjee's garden house, three miles off. The female Rustomjees were brought into society for the first time. They are dressed like Rosina, but covered with diamonds and pearls, and the old lady looked very jolly; but they do not speak any English. There was an immense crowd, and a great illumination with George's arms, and a 'Welcome to E. E. and F. E,' and so on, and, as they let us come away at eleven, it all did very well.

Barrackpore, Saturday, November 14.

There has been a cargo of traps and balls sent out by some of the last ships, and we played at trap and ball yesterday evening, which put me so in mind of B—— Hall. —— never played before, and never could hit the ball, and it was new to most of the gentlemen, who borrowed the trap that they may practise a little this morning.

We have the dearest monkey in the mena-

gerie here. He has no tail, and is in fact a very clever human being, only more active and graceful. He is not chained, and sits on a little railing, and there is a thing called an arctonox—something like a very small pig—that is also loose in front of the menagerie. The instant its back is turned the monkey steps along on its hind legs (it never goes on all fours), waving its arms, and pulls the pig's tail. If the pig turns round first, the monkey pretends to sit down in a demure attitude and to be leaning on one elbow, looking at the sky, and waits till the pig turns; then he gives a pull and skips back with a regular hearty laugh to his railing. He tried the trick with Chance yesterday, who was extremely indignant. —— wants the Court of Directors to make this monkey Provisional Governor-General, and I think it would be a good arrangement, as we could then go home at any moment with a safe conscience as to the government of India.

Calcutta, Monday, 16th.

This is our last post day.

We were so over-elated yesterday. The

'Cringer,' from Chusan, was semaphored, then spoke in the river; then a passenger came and told somebody, who told somebody else, who told ——, who drove straight up to Barrackpore, that the Emperor of China had agreed to everything, and that the admiral had gone to Canton to sign the treaty. It seemed so certain we were all in ecstasies; but when we received his despatches we were all sunk into despondency. In fact, if we had not been so cockahoop at first, we ought to be satisfied, I suppose. The Emperor has heard the proposed treaty, and appointed a high commissioner to meet Admiral Elliot at Canton, and nothing can be more civil than their communications, which is all new with Chinese. They also treat very kindly an artillery officer and a chaplain and some soldiers that they have *grabbed* one by one when the victims were out sketching, or bathing, or walking, and they are evidently very anxious for peace. China disagrees with our troops, who have been very sickly, though not dangerously so. Lord Jocelyn has been very ill, and was ordered off to Bombay, thence to go home on sick leave. Admiral Elliot speaks very highly of him, and says, if he had

not been really alarmed about him, he could very ill spare him.

Ever yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Calcutta, November 6, 1840.

My dearest Sister,—I may as well begin my letter under the influence of sore and disappointed feelings. My box of clothes! My expected treasures—the greatest treasures, because I have had no stock to go on upon for the last year and a half! Well, —— said she had sent them off on May 6—six months ago—so when Captain Hill announced yesterday that there was a box arrived for me as large as a pianoforte, the only wonder was that it had not arrived sooner and was not the size of a church organ. Wright and I unpacked it with great glee, but could not quite make out some of the things in it, until, at the bottom, we found a note from —— to say they were Fanny's. They left England two months after mine. I know my box will be drowned, and that I shall never be able to have the things. It is shocking to think how many

fishes must be swimming about dressed like me. It is not what we used to understand in the good old time by 'dressed fish.'

There are some things I often long to know—one whether, if you could be suddenly transported here without any interval—just taken up between the finger and thumb of an immense giant and landed instantly into Government House—whether you would think what we call our cold weather most painful suffocation. I wonder often, when I put on a shawl for the evening drive now, what you would say or do.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Calcutta, Tuesday, November 17, 1840.

I am going on very tamely, pining for your letters, and, by way of making it better, people go on hinting at how impossible it is that any letters should come through Egypt this month. Four days more will settle the point. How foolish we shall look if all our letters are returned to us—horrid, cold, flabby, over-kept letters, like bad, tasteless meat.

There are forty-six guns firing. Kurruck Singh, Runjeet's successor, is dead; some people say poisoned by his son, but the resident does not think so; and poor Kurruck was almost an idiot when we were at Lahore, and did not look as if he could live long, and he has been in a dying state for three months. The last medicine they tried with him was powdered emeralds—evidently not wholesome—and I can imagine they would not be comfortable to the stomach. It is rather convenient to our Government to have only one party to treat with instead of two, but Noor Mahal is very anti-English; at least his favourites are; he himself is only a very dissipated young man, very good-looking, though he was only recovering from the small-pox when we saw him.

I fancy Kurruck's wives found him rather a bore, for only one of them has thought it necessary to burn herself.

A great chief from Moorshedabad arrived on Sunday, and George held a durbar for him yesterday, much to the satisfaction of several Calcutta ladies, who had never seen one. He is only eleven years old and a very pretty boy. George has given him an English tutor, and

there is a great attempt making to educate him thoroughly; but his grandmother and mother are very jealous of him, and of each other, and contrive to keep him in the zenana most part of the day, where no education can reach him. It has been a great point to get him to Calcutta, but his mother has come too, carefully concealed in her palanquin, and the grandmother is furious. He is by right the King of Bengal, and consequently of all of us, and is the only native whose visit George returns here. He went to see him this afternoon, and, as all the gentlemen went, F—— and I went boldly out riding by ourselves; just the sort of thing which astonishes the Calcuttites; but we told Brown, the coachman, to ride carelessly and like a stranger within reach, and mentioned to the guards that we had rather they should not ride over us if we were kicked off. The course is so crowded, and the Indian horses so vicious, and the natives such bad coachmen, that there is never a day without some accident, but it did not fall on us to-day.

Wednesday, 18th.

Is not that curious and melodramatic? Noor Mahal went to his father's funeral pyre and said to Dhian Singh, the prime minister, that the fire and the sun had made him so hot he should like to go and stand in the shade of the great gateway of the palace. Just as he reached it the arch fell in, killed his young favourite, the nephew of Dhian Singh, on whose arm he was leaning, and injured him so much that he died two hours after; and now twenty-two guns are firing for his death. That is the third generation of Punjab kings we have seen since we have been here. Runjeet, his son Kurruck, and his grandson Noor Mahal.

They kept Noor Mahal's death a secret for twelve hours, till they had sent for our friend Shere Singh, and he is now king, and dear little Pertâb heir-apparent. This is a good thing for us; he is very friendly to the English, and the durbar is so weak with all these blows that they have consented to all our troops marching through their territories. We used to go under that gateway every day when we were at Lahore, and it looked as if it had stood since

the days of Alexander the Great, and might stand till the end of the world.

Fanny and I went to-day *in state* to visit the Begum of Mysore, the widow of the original Tippoo. We called on her when she was in Calcutta before, but I think she is grown younger and livelier. She is past eighty-six, but a very handsome old body, with magnificent eyes, and surrounded by her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who did not veil themselves up nor look so shy as last time; she looked very happy. Her son, Prince Gholâb, interpreted for us, and we sent her some rings and bracelets and china in the morning. She asked what the guns had been firing for, and when I told her she said, 'Oh, then I suppose you English will now take the Punjâb,' which showed how well the old lady knew us. Her youngest great-grandchild was in the room—only three months old, and its mother just thirteen. The baby was dressed in a long frock of gold kincob, with a sort of cocked hat of the same, and a quantity of black false hair sewed on to the hat or cap.

Saturday, 21st.

The Loodiana newswriter in his native idiom gave such an interesting account of Noor Mahal's funeral. Two of his wives burnt themselves with him; one was fifteen, the other thirteen. He said they were covered with jewels, and, as they walked together round the pyre, they looked like two young peris; then he described their lying down together and the lighting of the pile. There was a dense cloud of smoke, and, when that dispersed, in a few ashes alone were seen the remains of the young prince and the two beautiful fairies. All the other women happily were excused.

Wednesday, 25th.

Fanny and I went yesterday to visit the Begum of Moorshedabad, that young Nawâb's mother. She is quite a young woman—must have been pretty. Mrs. —— went with us to interpret. She is a very pretty little thing, and interpreted much better than anyone who ever went with us before. We gave some diamond rings and got some in exchange. The Begum held a large court of female attendants, and seemed passionately fond of her little son, who

went in with us, and we asked him to our party in the evening, to which he came, and was particularly anxious to have all the ladies presented to him and to shake hands with them.

Thursday, 26th.

Great news yesterday. After another slight defeat (in which our troops behaved very ill, but still won the day), Dost Mahomed rode off accompanied by one follower, went straight to Cabul, and found —— coming in from his evening ride. The Afghan follower went caracoling round him for some time, till he ascertained it was really ——; then he made a sign to a second man, who immediately rode up, got off his horse, announced himself as the Dost, and offered his sword. —— of course begged him to take back his sword, to get on his horse, and to ride home with him; and he is to have a neat little income secured to him, and be sent to live at Mussooree, or some nice little cold hilly station like his own. Dost Mahomed had always announced himself as the leader of a religious war—and the slave of God and the Prophet—who could not, if he fought alone, make friends with the infidel, and this sudden

unmartyrdom of himself stops a good deal of that sort of faith in him all over India.

We could not go to Barrackpore to-day, because it is the last day of the Mussulmans' fast, which has lasted a month, and they are all praying, and rejoicing, and eating, and could not bear to go from their families.

Barrackpore, Saturday, 28th.

We came up yesterday; the evenings are grown what we call so dreadfully cold, that I was obliged to borrow George's greatcoat to put on, besides my shawl, as he and I were late before we set off. When all is done I suppose it is hotter than a July evening at home; but the contrast you know from the hot weather!

Calcutta, Monday, December 1.

We have just seen some letters from Cabul. In that last engagement with Dost Mahomed one of our Bengal regiments of cavalry behaved so dreadfully ill, which is very unusual with sepoys. They refused to charge, and in consequence the officers charged alone. Three were killed and two dreadfully wounded; one of them is a Captain ——, whom we knew very

well at Simla, and whose face has been dreadfully cut to pieces. The story is very distressing, and the whole regiment will probably be dismissed, and it is quite unaccountable. If the sepoys have any spite against their officers, they would be very apt to take this line, as they have no feelings about the honour, or pleasure of fighting; but this was not the case, they say. Nor had they any scruple about Dost Mahomed—at least they do not say so. They did not run away, but just did nothing. Natural, but wrong.

Wednesday, 3rd.

The Nawâb came to our dance last night, and it was luckily, from new arrivals and the cold, a great crowd; so he was very well amused, but much astonished at the dancing. The natives always suppose that nobody takes the trouble of dancing unless they are paid for it.

Little Freddy made his first appearance today in a complete aide-de-camp's dress George has given him, all embroidered in gold, with a little sash and a little sword-belt, &c., and —— gave him a little pair of boots and spurs. He is very little even for three years old, and looks

so pretty strutting about. His spurs gave him a horrid tumble, and when I thought he was going to cry he looked up and said, 'Halloa! here's a soldier fallen down.' He is such a good little child.

Friday, 5th.

They all went to some races yesterday morning, got up to show the little Nawâb. They may get up races at six in the morning, but they cannot get me up to see them, so I excused myself.

Sunday, 7th.

We gave a great dinner yesterday to the Nawâb—sixty people—and George and I did a little extra duty by taking him in the afternoon to see the 'Cruizer,' the only Queen's ship that is in the river. She is very small, and they said her cabins were frightfully bad, of which I cannot speak from personal observation, as it always turns me dead sick to go down into any cabin, large or small. The Nawâb could not eat at our table, and the servants took great care that none of the dishes should touch him; and he and they pretended to make all sorts of excuses that he was not well, and that

eating so late disagreed with him ; but he seemed amused with the sight of our dishes, particularly the mince-pies with the burnt brandy. I rather think he took us all for inferior Madras jugglers and fire-eaters.

Tuesday, 8th.

I took Mrs. —— yesterday and her two boys, dressed as sailors, and Freddy in his aide-de-camp's dress, to see the Begum, who wanted to see some English children. They behaved so well ; Freddy allowed himself to be carried off by the little Nawâb and driven in his carriage back to Calcutta. Captain —— was luckily there, and says Freddy was so good. The Nawâb is very rough in his play, though very good-natured, and did his best to talk English with Freddy, which consisted chiefly in saying, 'My child, sit still,' and 'my child' said once, or twice, 'When may I get out of this carriage? I want to go back to Aunt Emmy.' He is a very good little article. George had a scientific party at night, which they thought would turn out dull, and so, of course the lectures were very good and the experiments successful, and people were all delighted, particularly with a *mag-*

nified frog, whose gigantic dance had a great effect.

Barrackpore, Saturday, 12th.

The Nawâb came yesterday and goes back to-night, and, as it is the first time he has ever slept out of his mother's room, it is a great step to have gained. He has got Major —— and his tutor and a great many of his native attendants with him in his bungalow, but he asked Captain —— if he would be so good as to sleep in his room; he thought he should feel happier. They got up a small review for him at the cantonment, and he has gone over to Serampore to see a printing press, and last night we took him to the menagerie. Those little native princes, particularly when they are so rich as this boy, are the grandest people in manner, so quiet and *don't-careish*, but so peremptory. Our black monkey amused him, and he turned round to one of his people and said, 'Find out its name and order some for me.' In the morning Captain —— had got from the Arab horse-dealers all the fine Arabians to look at; none cost less than 180*l.*, and he began by ordering twenty-five. However, they reasoned him at last into only taking five.

He came over to play at billiards this morning in such a pretty dress, not so loaded with jewels as usual, but his regular morning dress—very full gold-striped trousers and gold slippers, an under tunic of the finest possible muslin, and over it another of dark shawl lined with red velvet, a scarlet shawl sash, and a beautiful turban of innumerable rolls of fine white shawl with little narrow borders, and one row of large pearls and emeralds round his throat. It would be such a pretty dress for a fancy ball.

Tuesday, 15th.

We are to have our private theatricals this week. Captain Fitzgerald has built such a very pretty theatre in the ball-room on the upper storey, which is never used, and is, in fact, only a gallery between George's rooms and mine. They were rehearsing for three hours last night, and apparently with great success; but they would not let anybody come within hearing. However, I did take a little peep on my way upstairs, and it looked uncommonly pretty.

Wednesday, 16th.

This is to go to-day. I wonder where to or how, but it is to attempt its usual overland route.

Good bye.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Barrackpore, Monday, December 28, 1840.

I have neglected my journal dreadfully the last fortnight, partly because I got disheartened for want of letters, for if they did not come it was equally clear they could not go. However, that highly finished gentleman Mohamet Ali has apparently settled the first part of the business most ably, and during the last four days the letters have been pouring in in the most refreshing manner.

Since I wrote last we have had our private theatricals at Government House; most successful; I think *the* thing that has really pleased the Calcutta society. The theatre was very pretty and complete, the scenes good, the acting very good. I have never seen people laugh so heartily as they all did that evening, and they

are all bent on having more; and I suppose we must have, in the course of time, a French play there, as an excuse for giving the French artists a little money.

On Saturday we went to see the first stone of a public library laid by the Freemasons, and it was rather amusing and very ridiculous to see them in their dresses. Freemasonry is a great rage at Calcutta just now.

The weather is perfectly beautiful.

Wednesday, 30th.

I had such a good note from —— to-day about my tame squirrel, which is always left to its own devices when we come to Barrackpore, as it will not live in a cage nor find its way about two houses. The man who was left in charge sent word he had not seen it for five days, so I supposed it had been picked up by a kite, but —— wrote word, 'Madam, I have the honour to inform you that the squirrel returned home at twelve o'clock to-day, ate a good dinner, and immediately went to bed. He seems quite as well as if he had chosen to pass his Christmas at home.'

Friday, January 16, 1841.

We had an enormous dinner yesterday, chiefly of the strangers come in the last ships; there was a Mrs. ——, who sings English ballads without accompaniment in the loveliest manner —such a deep voice and yet so sweet—and she helped off the evening beautifully.

We have just been unpacking such a curious Chinese lamp that has been sent to George from China, and which will either stand in the hall at Knightsbridge, or the hall will stand in it—we cannot decide till it is put together—but it is very pretty; and Major —— has sent me two very curious wooden figures, which I am going to turn into the supports of a dressing table.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Barrackpore, Friday, February 6, 1841.

The little Nawâb has anchored just off our garden on his way back to Moorshedabad. Such a fleet of boats. George took him out driving, and I went (with Rosina to interpret) to visit the Begum in her furnace; she was so curtained and canopied up, and every jalousie shut. I thought I should have died of the heat, and then

they requested Captain —— and the boats with my servants to stand off and opened a crack of the jalousies; and then a fishing boat came in sight, and there was such a rush to shut us up again. Just as if the poor fishermen could see into that dark hole, and if they had they would have been very much disappointed. 'I am not the lovely girl I was,' and the Begum is such a little thing she is hardly visible to the naked eye. I am glad I was not born a 'purdah ne sheen,' a lady who lives and dies behind a curtain, or purdah; I know I should have plotted so immorally to trick my attendants.

The Begum enjoyed having a gossip with Rosina about England and English ways, and gave her money to the amount of 5*l.* when we came away, much to the old body's delight.

Calcutta, Tuesday, 10th.

We had such a narrow escape of running over a child to-day. There is always a crowd of petitioners at the gate when George goes out, and it has happened several times that, when a man cannot get the redress he wants, he throws himself down before the horses. The postilions are getting quite 'cute about it

now, though, if they could manage to inflict only a few hard bruises, it would be a good thing to give those people a slight idea of what it is to be run over, and they would not try it again. As it is, it puts the horses and riders and everybody in a fume, and nearly overturns the carriage, though the police do their best to interfere. To-day a tall gaunt man, without a stitch of clothes on, after running and screaming after the carriage till he had distanced the police, threw his baby right under the horses' feet, and it is the greatest mercy it was not hurt. It puts me in such a *taking*, and I long to beat the father instead of pitying him.

The other day, when we had a great dinner, one of the sepoys on guard went mad, and would come into the dining-room to state his grievances to the Governor-General, and he had drawn his bayonet and was stabbing away at everybody who tried to stop him, even at Captain ——, who went out to him. They were obliged to get some more of the sentries with their muskets, who pretended to attack him, and, while he was defending himself from them, the servants behind him got hold of his legs and pulled him down ; but it took ten of them

to hold him, and his screams were horrible. Luckily he did not get into the room. It was a blessing he did not go mad at night, for everybody sleeps with their doors and windows open. A mad sentry would have had great fun rushing about the house.

Wednesday, 11th.

We had a French conjuror last night, and asked all the children that could be collected, but, as there are few above six years old, and still fewer who speak a word of English, we could not muster a great many. Luckily the grown people thought it quite delightful. He was rather amusing from mere impudence, otherwise his tricks were very poor.

Friday, 13th.

Our gaunt petitioner again nearly annihilated himself and baby yesterday, and the guards were obliged to ride him off the road, so to-day we took Captain ——, who answers all petitions, with us, and when the man rushed at the carriage again, Captain —— got hold of him and took him home. He says he has been cheated by some other natives up the country of all he

had in the world, and so he has come down here with all his family to see the Governor-General, who, of course, could not interfere, and so then, he determined the carriage should go over him. I wonder whether they really mean it, but I suppose so. In the Upper Provinces they threaten to throw themselves down the well of their enemy, who always buys them off. Captain —— is to write to the magistrate of this man's district, and in the meanwhile I have begged he will give him any number of rupees he may want, so that he will not keep my heart in my mouth every time we go out airing.

Saturday, 14th.

This time twelve months how we shall be beating down the Bay of Bengal, and how sick I shall be! However, it won't signify this time.

God bless you! Love to all.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO A FRIEND.

Wednesday, March 3, 1841.

I went this morning to an examination of the European female orphans; the school is very well managed now by the mistress, but it is rather distressing to see European children examined after natives. Even ——, who is against native education, says it is the most surprising difference possible. Little natives of seven years old will go through the longest sums and give definitions of English words, and are quite ready at little details of English history, and they are all panting with eagerness. These girls looked quite *put out*, and became quite silent after the governess had told them to *speak up* once or twice, and, though all of them knew how much five times fifteen was, the whole first class failed in guessing how much fifteen times five was. I own it is very difficult, but then I am a stupid European.

Thursday, 4th.

We have been here five years to-day, and are regularly cheated about another year. How-

ever, George is writing home by this post to say that he positively goes next February, and I mean to look over that letter before it goes, to be sure he makes no mistake.

Mars and Jones stuck to their day, and the wedding took place at five this afternoon. It was a very pretty wedding, though we only saw the female part of the procession.

Wednesday, 10th.

It is very odd weather—so cold that we were obliged to have the windows shut all the evening, and very few people came to our dance, because they are afraid of cold. When the thermometer is at 90° they dance in crowds.

Thursday, 11th.

I went with Captain —— this afternoon to see some curious china that is to be sold by auction to-morrow. It belongs to a gentleman we knew, and comes from Nankin; there are a few very beautiful things, but I suppose they will fetch an immense price.

George and I are going in the evening to Barrackpore. Jimmund has just brought

Chance to show he is too ill to be moved. I wish he would die, poor little dog, or that I had the heart to have him prussic-*acided*; it looks such a miserable state to be in.

Saturday, 13th.

Captain —— had such a good letter from our baboo to-day, whom I told to bid at that sale. He mentions the immense prices most of the things fetched, and that he had only bought a pair of magnificent jars I wanted for George. 'But I made a great mistake when I had made my bid of 200 rupees. Mr. France told me it was for one jar, and not for the lot. I could think of no other means but to submit. But, sir, Miss Eden will think me a regular fool for so far exceeding her orders, and of course, I am bound to sell the jars again on my own account if she wishes it, but it will be a great expense to my finances.' He never mis-spells a word, and pronounces English with hardly any accent, but, with all his Eastern formality, brings in common expressions like 'a regular fool,' &c., in the civilest manner.

Monday, 15th.

The baboo managed very well about the jars; they are handsomer even than I expected, and everybody says they are *very cheap*. I never saw anything the least like them.

Tuesday, 16th.

This must go to-day.

We have had that number of 'Humphrey's Clock' in which the Marchioness nurses Swiveller through his illness, and explains to him that, if you 'make believe very much, orange-peel and water is very nice.' I am so fond of that couple. Kit should not have been so particular, I think. I am exceedingly sorry we have not buried Nell yet.

God bless you! Love to all.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

Calcutta, Monday, March 22, 1841.

Poor little Chance was as ill as possible yesterday. I am quite sorry I saw him; he was such an object, and it was absolutely necessary to have him shot this morning. His mouth was in such a state of disease. I wish he had

died a natural death, as he was to die, and altogether I am quite nohow about it to-day. I suppose it is very foolish; in short, I see it is; but for eight years Chance has been an amusement, and he is connected with Greenwich and St. John's Wood and the Admiralty, and then he was a great occupation on board the 'Jupiter' and here; and he was the amusement of the camp with his elephant and his followers, and altogether we have been through so many vicissitudes of life together that I feel quite lonesome. Everybody made a pet of him here, and poor Jimmund, Giles says, has been sobbing all day. That very low class of natives attach themselves to a dog as if it were a child, and, having no other occupation but to attend to it, they teach it to be almost sensible. He has kept Chance alive this last month by mere care, for it was a hopeless case. I have had all sorts of successors offered me long ago, and there are so many lonely hours in this country that some pet is quite necessary, but I cannot think any of the dogs look more than half-witted. There is only one at all like Chance in beauty, and the owner asks 30*l.* for it, and thinks it a great sacrifice to let the Lady Sahib have it at all.

Thursday, 25th.

A Dr. ——, who has just come out, brought with him two very small spaniels, and, hearing of Chance's death, has sent me one. I am sure it is very kind of him, and the gentlemen all say the dog is beautiful, but it is not the sort of dog I admire. I have just made it over to poor Jimmund, who looks very disconsolate. I asked him if he thought it pretty, and his answer in Hindustani was, 'Whatever the Lady Sahib likes her servant will take care of, but Chance was the child of his heart,' and the great tears kept falling on this little dog's head. Wright says Jimmund brought his wife last night after it was quite dark, and they sat crying over Chance's grave for an hour, and, as they do not know I know it, it was really for their own comfort. Chance always slept at their house, and they fancy he was *lucky* to them, which natives think much of.

Saturday, April 3.

We had a great storm last night, which I hope will stop the cholera. It is not so bad here as at other places; the dâk through Burdwan has been stopped for want of bearers; the last

gentleman who travelled through it, says he counted more than 200 bearers who had dropped down dead on the roadside, and near Dacca the bodies were counted by thousands that had been thrown into the river.

Sunday, 4th.

My poor tailor went away from his work quite well at five o'clock yesterday, and was dead before morning with cholera. He was a very respectable man and an excellent dress-maker, and Wright and Rosina are very unhappy about him. It certainly is a fearful disorder, and all these poor people live in such small huts, in such swampy situations, one only wonders how any of them escape.

I do not at all like my new dog. He never sits still a minute, and he cares for nobody but his old master, whom he sometimes meets out walking; then his name is Duke, which the natives cannot pronounce, and, as he is always running away, there are constantly twenty servants rushing about calling 'Juck, Juck, Juck!' All the gentlemen say he is so beautiful and will grow tame in time. I am sure poor Chance would pity me with this dreadful

Juck. Sometimes it strikes me that, as it has only just landed, these may be English spirits, and that you are all *Jucks* in your habits compared to us. It is very alarming.

God bless you! Love to all.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Calcutta, Wednesday, April 28, 1841.

MY DEAREST ——,—It is fearfully hot now, and —— is out in it all tiger-hunting, but declares it is cool near the hills. They had only seen one tiger, which was a very ferocious one; pulled down three elephants, and carried off one of the poor mahouts. He passed with the man in his mouth within ten yards of ——, who fired, and luckily hit the tiger in the loins, who dropped the man and sprang on the back of ——'s elephant. He knocked him off into the river, when the others came up and killed him. The mahout's arm was very much torn, but he is likely to recover. The idea of seeing that sort of scene for pleasure! I don't think 10,000*l.* would pay me for it. Mr. —— came to see me yesterday; he has

been up to Assam to look after our tea interests, and is come back delighted with his journey and the unexplored rivers, and wild tribes, and jungle, &c. He told me that the Governor-General's agent there had paid rewards for 3,600 tigers, which had been brought in last year; five rupees per head is paid for a tiger, and the heads and skins had most of them been burnt, as there are no means of disposing of them there. Such a pity; you might have liked a tiger-skin carpet. Mr. —— brought down heaps of skins for his own house. There is one native who has shot fifteen tigers every month with poisoned arrows. Such a nice country to live in! But the last crop of tea was delicious.

I have had such a curious present to-day—a Chinese god—the household deity of Admiral Quang, who was killed at Chuenpee. It is all japanned red and gold—a nice fat idol in a beautiful chair and one of the handsomest curiosities I have seen—something quite new. The captain of one of the steamers, who used to take us to Barrackpore, sent it to me, which I look upon as a very genteel attention on his part. Moreover I have had a present of a real live Argus phea-

sant, as big as a peacock. I hope Mr. —— has got those two stuffed ones I sent him, and then you will judge of the beauty of this. It is the first that has arrived alive here, at least in our time, and it is wonderfully beautiful.

Friday, May 8.

There has been a great triumph to George's Barrackpore school. Sir Edward and Mr. ——, &c., have been examining candidates for the Medical College. There were fifteen vacancies and candidates from the Hindu College, the Scotch Assembly Schools, and all the great institutions which are taught by the best English masters. Six of George's boys, fired with a noble ardour, came up, and three of them carried off three of the vacancies, and one boy stood second on the list. Considering they are children of the poorest villagers, that the school has been built only four years and the master is a native, and that they are examined in ancient and modern history, geography, mathematics, and algebra, and in English composition, it really does them all, particularly the master, great credit. Sir Edward says that English pronunciation was quite marvellous. He will be a horrid loss to this coun-

try, and so will Mr. ——; they take such unbounded pains with the natives, but they both go home this year.

Love to all.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

Wednesday, May 19.

A Parsee friend has imported such a beautiful carved ivory boat for me. I never saw anything like it; it is like the finest lace, and the three little cabins are fitted up with ivory tables and sofas, and Chinese drinking out of ivory tea-cups. Sweetly pretty! but I wish I knew what I am to pay for it.

Saturday, 22nd.

Our deposed Dost Mahomed arrived this morning. George did not like to receive him in durbar, or with honours, as everything that is done will be exaggerated in Cabul, and may make mischief there. So it was settled he was to drive to Government House on his way to the house he is to live in, and to pay a common morning visit. So we got it up (Captain —— and I) in a sort of half-and-half way; arranged

our morning drawing-room in the native style—a sofa at one end and a long lane of chairs and sofas leading up to it, with two rows of servants with silver sticks behind the chairs—and I got —— to order a few of the bodyguard to stand in the corner of the room. George sat on his sofa, with the secretaries and aides-de-camp on the rows of chairs all bolt upright and doing nothing, and I flatter myself that the Dost thinks that is the way in which he passes his day. He was told that he was to find George at his usual morning occupation. So if the Governor-General could take Cabul in that dawdling manner, there can be no bounds to what he would do, if he took to apply himself, and ever held a pen, or read a paper. Dost Mahomed came with two sons and some attendants under the charge of Captain ——.

The Dost is a fine-looking man with very good manners; I should think imperious in his own house, but very easy and frank. He talks Arabic, which —— makes a shocking mess of, and drove ——, who speaks it like English, to the verge of desperation. George offered him our coach to go home in as a sort of compliment, and Captain Nicolson said he would like

it, but that, as he had never been in *any* carriage till this morning, when he landed at Cossipore, he was no judge of those matters. I made a little peephole for myself in the billiard-room and did a slight sketch, which gives the 'general effect,' but the room was so dark I could not make an actual likeness.

Monday, 24th.

It was so fearfully hot yesterday; we could not go to church either morning or evening. I never knew anything like the weather, and cannot imagine how we are to get through the ball to-night.

Wednesday, 26th.

Our ball went off beautifully; much the best Queen's ball I have seen. In general there are such odd-looking people at it; but, though it was a great crowd, it was much better society. Dost Mahomed came, and also an ex-king of Johanna, an odd-looking creature, with some savage-looking followers. All the Mysore princes came, and a great many other natives, covered with jewels. We never go in to these balls till everybody is assembled, and he was

very much struck at George's entry, which is always a pretty sight; the rooms are so large, and lined with soldiers, and lowering the colours, and resenting arms, and the three bands playing one after the other, all struck his fancy, and the company looks so orderly, standing in a circle at first, like one of their own durbars. I do not think he saw the dancing, as George carried him off into the south hall, and several gentlemen went and assisted him in turns, and C—— contrived to get the interpretation into his own hands; so the conversation went on very well. He seems clever and very kingly in his ways. By way of relieving George, after a time, I asked him if he would play at chess; I beat him the first game, which was odd, as he would only play the native game—would only allow the pawns to take one step—no castleing, and the knight may not check the king—and, as this makes quite a different game, it was no wonder he beat me the second, which was a very long one; these rules only came out as the game went on, but he seems to be a very good player. He went away before supper.

We sat down above five hundred to supper,

and it is wonderful how well St. Cloud turns out that sort of thing in such horrid weather; it was really beautiful, and most of the meat must, of course, have been killed only in the morning.

The ball went on till half-past two, and, as I had been up at half-past five in the morning to see F —— off, it was not surprising that I was in bed with the headache all yesterday. But we had our usual luck in a short storm, just half-an-hour before the ball began, which made it possible to breathe, and there is some fun in breathing Mrs. ——, even in a ball-room when it has not been feasible anywhere else, for three days.

I pitied the aides-de-camp. —— stayed for two hours very gallantly, though he is not at all right yet. Captain M—— came out all over leech-bites, having had a return of his Scinde fever. Captain H—— has been living on calomel for two days, and came, as he said, with his head beating time to the music. Captain A—— was *quinine-ing* away a slight ague; and just as I was telling Captain O—— he was our best hope, he dropped off the perch—fainted dead away at dinner—and it appeared he had

been quelling a tendency to cholera all day, by opium. However, they all danced, and all did the honours of supper, and are not the worse for it, and the pleasure of a ball going off well makes up to them for the trouble, apparently.

Sunday, 30th.

I think the weather is gone mad; we have not been able to go out airing even, the last three evenings, and, though under a punkah, I cannot get a wink of sleep. How George gets through the night without one I cannot think. I bear this bad season rather patiently, because I think it must settle George's mind about going home.

Thursday, June 3.

We have not been to Barrackpore for six weeks, and this was our day for it, but it is impossible to stir in such weather. ——, who borrowed one of the bungalows for two days, says it was just like being before a large kitchen fire, and he is not susceptible of heat. People say there has not been such a season as this known for years. I wish you could feel it just for one hour; the thermometer is still only 87° in my room, but it is a thick, dense heat,

like that of a hothouse. Yesterday morning, when I was dressing, I was so nearly fainting I was obliged to lie down, and then when I got up, Wright went off in the same way; neither of us ill, but we could not bear the heat, and the natives are nearly as bad. The men who are pulling the punkahs have, I see, set up large fans, with which they fan themseves with the other hand.

Friday, 4th.

We had at last a lovely thunderstorm yesterday, which has cleared the air, and we must have the rains in a week at the latest, and I can push on now with great glee, thanks to that storm and the conviction that this is our last year in India.

Mr. —— has just been here with another little dog, a likeness of Chance, quite as small, and with the most attractive manner; and I think Zoe will suit me. There has been a great bidding among the aides-de-camp for Juck, who is reckoned quite beautiful, but I had always promised it to Captain M——.

Mr. —— brought me such beautiful sketches of Darjeeling to look at this morning. It is a

consolation for those who are booked for many years at Calcutta to know that there is this town growing up within four hundred miles, with its hills and valleys, and snowy range, and waterfalls. It seems to be exactly like Simla, and stands as high, but one is twelve hundred miles off and the other four hundred.

Ever yours most affectionately,

E. E.

Barrackpore, Saturday, June 3, 1841.

We came up here on Thursday.

Yesterday morning the Dost and his sons, &c., came up early in the 'Soonamookie.' It was the first time he had ever been towed by a steamer, and he was very much pleased with it, but more struck with the fitting up of the pinnace than anything else. It has five or six very pretty cabins, and the furniture is all white and gold and very showy, which delighted him, and the oil-cloth on the floor was a new invention to him, and he thought it beautiful. It is very odd how often the commonest inventions strike them first. George took him out in the afternoon with his sons in another carriage, and the giraffe took his fancy prodigiously. He said it

he were to tell in his own country the things he had seen, they would call him a liar. I got Mr. —— to ask him if he kept any journal, and he said directly, 'No; as they would not believe what I should say, what is the use of writing? That would only make it worse.' We had a ball for him in the evening, and this morning he has been sitting to me for his picture; but I made only a very hurried sketch, as it was a tiresome operation for him. He is living at one of the bungalows, and is to send us over an Afghan dinner to-day, with a dinner for all the servants. I hope none of his bigoted followers will throw a little poison in, don't you? I mean to eat slowly, in hopes to perceive the first twinge before it is too late.

One of the Calcutta papers put in a number of falsehoods about the manner in which Captain —— treated him; that he was treated as a close prisoner, and only *ordered* out by the 'Lord Sahib's hookum' (or command) when he went to see any sights with George, that spies were sent even into his zenana, &c. Captain —— lives in a house a mile from his, and never goes to him but when he is sent for. The Dost has no zenana here, greatly to his own grief;

but he says his wives at Loodiana would hear of it and resent it when he goes back; and of course his going out with George is one of the distinctions he is most proud of, and that he always dwells upon, when he talks of the treatment he met with when he was a prisoner to the King of Bokhara. However, the paragraph was shown to him by some native, and put him in one of his greatest rages, and he cannot understand why the editor is not to have his head cut off. He found out that the authority was a sort of renegade Afghan, whom he had refused to entertain, and he sent for him and got a written retraction from him, which he insists on having published. The editor of the paper is in a sad puzzle about it, but ends by starting a grand proposition—that, at all events, they are right to have made the statement, even if false, because it has brought out the truth. Such a good principle to go upon!

Sunday, 4th.

George and I were sitting by the water-side yesterday evening, and the Dost saw us, and came with his nephew and an interpreter and established himself by us, just as any English-

man would do at a country house, and sat talking there very amusingly till the dinner-bell rang.

We ate our Afghan dinner, which was very good; a kid roasted whole and stuffed with pistachio nuts was the chief item, and quantities of sweetmeats.

Rosina has improved wonderfully the last two days, and Dr. —— does not despair of making a complete cure.

I went to church this morning, but was obliged to come out, being nearly blind with the heat. I never will try morning church again in this season.

God bless you, dearest!

You may *answer* this letter and the next, but after that there will be no time for answers. Oh, dear! how pleasant it will be, and how clever of us to have brought that immense banishment so near to an end—not much more than six months, and what is that to anybody who has been six years away? It will be too great happiness. I hardly ever can think steadily of it.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Calcutta, Thursday, June 10, 1841.

The express went yesterday, by which I sent off a letter to Robert and one to ——, but to be sure it is very difficult to write at all. I forget whether I have ever mentioned to you that it is very hot in India, because it is—*very* hot. I cannot possibly say less. Dost Mahomed was here again on Tuesday at a very small party, and, when George asked him how he bore the weather, he said he had, in the course of his life, been at Dadur, and that it was a common Mussulman proverb, 'Why, if God created Dadur, did he take the trouble to make hell too?' a rational proverb as applied to India generally. The Dost was in great spirits and extremely struck with all he had seen. He said he could not understand it, that he felt giddy; that when he was on board the 'India,' the great steamer, he thought he had understood what was explained to him, but that when his nephew asked him, when he went home, what he had seen, he said, 'You must go and see for yourself; how can I ever

describe what these people do?' He was very anxious to know if there really were in Europe a larger house than Government House; and when George said something to him about our customs, which allowed of women coming into society, &c., he said, 'You are quite right; you make a Paradise; now this looks like one.' He would have made a great sensation in a London room with his sons and suite standing round him, in their immense turbans and with flame-coloured, or scarlet, or blue dresses embroidered in gold. Dreadfully hot, poor dears! but I suppose they would not think muslin quite correct. Perhaps they are not more picturesque than the other natives, but they are quite different and look new; they are very Jewish in countenance and colour.

It was so desperately hot yesterday that even in the evening we could hardly move; but there was a little storm, and it is now cooler.

Barrackpore, Saturday, 12th.

This is worse than ever: hardly anybody can move, or speak for the heat, and the servants lie sleeping about the house like so many corpses. Little —— sleeps half the day in my

room, and wakes up rubbing her eyes and talking Hindustani, and then says, 'You have been so fast asleep, Miss Eden; I have been awake all the time, reading.'

Wednesday, 16th.

We had a great dinner on Monday, which was rather amusing, as a Dr. —— played all sorts of tricks with cards in the evening, some so entirely incredible that they would have done honour to a good conjuror at home, and had great success; and he said another time, when he had been forewarned, he could have done a great many more.

Poor Rosina is so dreadfully ill. I have done nothing but cry about her all the morning; she suffers so much, and it is perhaps a mercy it is not likely to last much longer; but still for nearly six years she has been such a good affectionate old body to me. I shall miss her very much. Wright was in a sad way about her this morning, and woke me up early to say she thought her dying. I sent her up to Barrackpore last week for change of air, and also to get her under the care of a Dr. —— there. Poor Rosina says, 'Dr. —— so nice

man; he ask questions and feel my pulse and my side, and then bring another doctor, and they give me stuff, and then come in two hours and say that no good now take this; just like Dr. Drummond.' She was getting better, but then she took a fancy to come down to Calcutta, to make over her trinkets and shawls to Wright to divide after her death amongst her relations; she was much worse yesterday and as ill as possible to-day. I have now sent her up in a boat with her husband and the native doctor, but I fear nobody can do her any good.

Thursday, 17th.

Wright went up to Barrackpore this morning and came down this afternoon, and says Rosina is alive, but occasionally in great pain, followed by fainting fits. Wright is very low about her. Dr. —— writes me word that, if he can once give her a little strength, and if her pulse can ever be felt, he thinks he can do her good yet; but the natives are so fragile, and live on such wretched food, that when once they sink they go very fast. Wright says Dr. —— brought another doctor with him, and that they were with her half the day.

Barrackpore, Saturday, 19th.

I made a grand exertion, sent on horses over night, got up at half-past five this morning, and drove up to see Rosina. She is certainly better—not out of danger of course, but stronger—and Dr. —— says in another day will be able to bear the remedies that are necessary for her side. There is still danger of abscess forming on the liver, but she looks so much more like herself that I am glad to have seen her, and the poor old body is delighted to have me here for the day, and had herself carried over to my room, and I have had a great deal of talk with her. Dr. —— talks to her just as everybody else does, and says he has never seen so sensible a native, and hardly ever met a pleasanter old lady to talk to than she is.

Calcutta, Monday, 21st.

I got back very safely on Saturday, considering that an officer in the cantonment tried to carry off to the guard-house Ukbar, our head coachman, because Ukbar, who lets out keranchees—a sort of hackney coach—asked to be paid for one that this officer had hired. He did not know that the man was

our coachman, but that is the sort of way in which most Europeans treat natives, and then say they are 'ungrateful rascals.'

George wonders every day how we are allowed to keep this country a week. I have often seen, when I have been sitting in the verandah at sunrise, a great bulldog run at natives, who, with their bare legs and feet, are particularly terrified at dogs. Dr. —— told me that he saw a bheestie worried by this dog one morning, and that he drove it off, and soon after, he met a young man riding and this dog following. He did not know him, but he stopped and told him that he had driven the dog away from a native. 'Oh, did you?' he said; 'why I keep this dog and another for the sake of hunting the niggers. I had a famous run this morning after a black fellow on the course, and brought him down.' Dr. —— told him he should go to the magistrate, which he did. George would willingly give 50 rupees to anybody who would catch this indigo planter at his morning hunt, and I have established through Captain —— a communication with a superintendent of police, which I hope will procure the desired result; but is it not enough to make anybody foam

with rage? I wonder what natives must think of the Christian religion, judging by its effects here? An indigo planter the other day murdered his wife, a girl of sixteen, in the most horrible manner—beat her to death—and, because she was half-caste, the other planters in the neighbourhood helped him to get away, and the magistrate took no notice of the murder till the papers got hold of it. Then the Government interfered, but the murderer had gone off to France. 'Indeed, indeed, I'm very, very sick.'

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

July 1, 1841.
On board the 'Cowasjee Family.'

I dare say you are on the ocean too. We have just been passing an uninhabited island; have you? Since I wrote to you last we did our voyage in the 'Queen' steamer with wonderfully little suffering. I think those great war tea-kettles, which go rolling on through storm and calm, wonderful inventions. The paddles are not irritating, and though the powder-magazine was under my cabin, and cannon-balls would break loose and run about the deck, that was

preferable to the noise of ropes and the creaking of bulkheads. A gale of wind, to which, now it is over, I can never be sufficiently obliged, made us put in to the Prince of Wales Island—the most beautiful sample of an island you can fancy, and with a hill where the climate is perfect—and there —— and I remained instead of going on to Singapore. They gave up the Government House to us, and anything like the beauty of the view from it you never dreamed of. We were chiefly waited upon by convicts; some branded on the forehead for murder; but it was the sin of their youth, and we were evidently expected to think it venial. In sixteen days they sent this ship for us from Singapore. Our cabins are excellent; but oh, my dear, if you, with your set-up yacht notions, were to see our crew!—Malays, Chinese, Lascars, Hindus, Mussulmans—half of them trepanned on board. Some were grooms, some gentlemen's servants, and when heavy squalls come on, as they constantly do in these seas, they hide themselves wherever they can, naturally enough; two were found sewn up in a sail last night, more hid in a copper. Many of these ships are lost in consequence of the merchants' system of

pressing men on board who have never seen a ship before.

Calcutta, July 7.

Here we are on dry land again, and find George and Emily well, and all of you well. Such a pleasure! I found you sailing pleasantly about the Bay of Naples. The overland post is gone, but I am just in time for George's express. Such a furnace as this Calcutta is after having been cooled! We have been rolled about a little more than has agreed with me the last week. After being becalmed for eight days in the straits, we ran home in ten hours at the rate of ten knots an hour; and, though it was the very easiest ship I ever sailed in, we had more than sufficient rolling in the Bay of Bengal.

I've got something pretty for you; I am going to make you a present of it; the first man that goes to England shall take it for you. It is one of the small inlaid tables they make at Penang. I declare I think it quite pretty.

I'm glad the sea-air has taken some of your hair off, for it has taken nearly all mine. I

have exactly three hairs left, and two of them are grey.

Yours most affectionately,

F. H. EDEN.

FROM THE HON. EMILY EDEN TO ——.

Saturday, July 11, 1841.

In despair at the heat, which has prevented my trying to write to you for three days, I have told them to open all the doors and all the windows and the blinds an hour too soon, and have *sot* myself down in the draught, and, upon the whole, I prefer the blast of the furnace to the furnace itself; it is a change at least, and it has invigorated me to writing pitch. Moreover I can see the sky; and don't you opine that that black cloud is going to end in a torrent? I was sure that you would say so, but then you are only just arrived and know nothing; the rains *won't* come down this year. They pack up and are quite ready and then change their minds, and nobody can blame them. I dare say it is much pleasanter up in the clouds, only it would be more gentlemanlike not to hold out false hopes.

Let me see what has happened to-day. It is

rather difficult to say that anything has. First Rosina came down from Barrackpore yesterday rather a skeleton, but the pain and swelling in her side apparently cured and she quite delighted. She is gone back to have her cure finished; and I have just given her some very pretty opal studs to present to her doctor, which particularly pleases her. Next a visit from the Baboo Setanaut Bhore, a good old fellow who has had the charge of all the Government presents made and received, who manages all durbars, &c., and George has given him a great place of near 2,000*l.* a year at Moorshedabad, and I never saw anybody so pleased, or so grateful. Moreover, it gives him rank, and entitles him to sit down when he pays a visit; so before he came I stuck a very large armchair near the table, that he might have the full pleasure of it. All natives who speak English at all, love hard words, and he said, 'My Lady must not think it *sycophancy*, or too much gratitude, but all we poor natives do say the same thing—that we never had so good Governor. My uncle not believe when I say that the Governor-General gave me this place of his own thought, not to please some great man, but

because he pleased to think I do it well.' It is quite true, and the incredulous uncle is now convinced of it; though very few natives could possibly be brought to believe that any patronage could be given without jobbing, and hardly any without bribery. Our own baboo is very anxious to succeed Setanaut, but we are so near going away that it would be hard to deprive the next dynasty of the only man that knows the monied usages of the house; and, indeed, we only suppose he is anxious to go because he, with the other servants, are all growing fidgety about a change of masters, a thing they cannot abide. It is a great object to be on the list of public servants, and the man who paints flowers for me gave Wright an excellent petition yesterday. It was directed to 'Miss Wright, Esquire,' and said that he was quite happy now, but that before we went he should 'like to enlist under the mighty banners of Establishment List,' and begged her honour to mention it.

And then there is the 'Tenasserim' steamer coming up the river, in which there is a silver betel-nut box for me—a curiosity from Ava—sent by Mrs. M——, who says it is to be had for 150*rs.*—the mere cost of the silver—and I

may take it or return it. I know I shall want to take it, but then the 15*l.* is not so pleasant. I hope it will turn out ugly.

Love to all.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO THE SAME.

Wednesday, September 1, 1841.

I had such a bad headache all yesterday. I could not go down to our party, and it was partly accounted for at night by a most awful thunderstorm. We are used to a considerable deal of clatter in the way of thunder, but anything like this I never heard; such sharp cracks, and the night as light as day with the lightning; it was really unpleasant, though I do not care much about thunder in general. All Calcutta got up and rushed about their houses, and got under their beds, and into their closets, and all the usual precautions. I prefer lying in bed, not knowing how to die more comfortably; but Wright stalked about with a small night lamp in her hand, followed by the bath woman with another, she saying in English that we should all be killed, and I suppose Jeltom was saying

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the same in Hindustani; and Giles and Bright thought the great figure of Britannia at the top of the house had been struck, and they came to see whether it had fallen into my passage; and Zoe set up a howl; and all the stable-keepers say that their horses trembled dreadfully before the storm began, and many of them broke loose when it came. Altogether it was a bad storm, and the lightning struck an adjutant that was perched on one of our gateways and cut off its ugly head. The plain was quite under water this morning.

Wednesday, 15th.

I was so active this morning. The Dost and his family all set off to-day for the Upper Provinces, and I have done a sketch of him and his two sons—merely their heads—and wanted his nephew, who is a beautiful specimen of a Jewish Afghan, to fill up the sheet; so Mr. C—— abstracted him out of the steamer early this morning and brought him to my room before breakfast, and the son, Hyder Khan, came with him merely for the pleasure of the visit. Mr. C—— speaks Persian so readily that they are much pleasanter with him than with —— as an interpreter, and they were very amusing about

the liberty which Englishwomen have. They told Mr. C—— it was the only foolish thing they had seen in Englishmen, that they could not have believed it, if it had been told to them. 'In fact,' Hyder Khan said, 'it makes up for all the rest. You are the slaves of your women, and we are the masters of ours.' I said that if I could get into their zenana we should hear another version. 'Oh no,' he said, 'you could hear nothing, because our wives could not speak unless we gave leave; and if they did we should beat them. It is the first rule we make, that a wife is never to speak till she is spoken to; so she can never begin a quarrel.' They were quite curious to make out from Mr. C—— how it was that Englishwomen began to get their own way at first. I said it must be their own cleverness. 'No,' the Jewish nephew said; 'they were very clever, and that as Allah made them so, it was all right; but still He had made Englishmen very clever too, and how they who could invent ships, and guns, and steamers, &c., could not invent a way by which they could be masters of their own wives he could not understand.' My drawing is a very pretty one, and they are pleased with their own likenesses.

Thursday, 16th.

The post goes to-day, and we are going to Barrackpore, so I must finish. Wright stays behind this time because she is preparing things for the voyage. So pleasant! I like to set things going; it looks like clinching the business. We are always talking Englishly now.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO ——.

Wednesday, October 6.

I had such temptations to-day in the way of a Chinese lamp and a Chinese screen—not of any value, but unlike anything that has ever been brought out of China. They were sent to me by a doctor who has been with the troops, and has picked up quantities of curious things, which he has distributed about Calcutta. The lamp was beautifully painted, and he said he had bought the furniture of a complete Chinese room, which he was dispersing, as he was leaving Calcutta. I never saw such a pretty thing as the screen—in a carved ebony frame, with a

brilliant picture of flowers, and a peacock made in some mysterious Chinese manner.

Wednesday, 13th.

We all went to the play on Monday except Fanny, who thought it would be tiresome; but, for a wonder, it turned out very amusing. The great actress, Mrs. D——, acted the Lady of Lyons. What an interesting play it is! And she did it very well, though a little Miss C——, who came out only as the confidante of Mrs. D—— on half-pay, cut her out completely. She is one of the best comic actresses I have seen, and had great success: the house was for the first time so full that there was not a spare chair. Mrs. D—— is very handsome, and Miss C—— very ugly, but they were both so applauded that Mrs. L——, who was born in the country, and has for eighteen years been the only professional actress in India, fell into hysterics, rushed into Mrs. D——'s room, and said she must have paid people to applaud her, and that she should never act again on her stage. Mrs. D——, with considerable majesty, desired her leave the room. Mrs. L—— said it was *her* room and *her* theatre. Mrs. D—— signified that if these were Indian

manners she should return in the ship which brought her out, whereupon Mrs. L—— rushed on the stage to appeal to the public not to applaud her any more, but unluckily was forced off by a strong body of amateur actors before she could get before the curtain, which is a pity. I had a real play headache yesterday, which shows it must have been like a real English play, and now we are only in a dreadful fright lest all the clerks and a few cadets should marry Mrs. D—— and Miss C——, before we have seen 'Victorine' and several farces we have set our hearts on.

Thursday, November 11.

We went last night to see 'Macbeth'—a bold attempt, but we promised to go, and we were rather rewarded for the exertion, for it was remarkably well acted. Mrs. D—— is a very good Lady Macbeth, and I must say Mr. —— also acts very well. The music, too, of 'Macbeth' is always pretty, and, on the whole, there was no great magnanimity in having gone there. The house was over-full, and it must be a wonderful change to people who remember India ten years ago to see quantities of baboos, who could

not get seats, standing on their benches reading their Shakspeares, and then looking off at the stage, and then applauding on the backs of their books. At least one-third of the audience were natives, who were hardly admitted to the theatre when first we came, and certainly did not understand what they saw. The native generation who have been brought up at the Hindu College are perfectly mad about Shakspeare. What a triumph it is for him, dear creature! Plays that he wrote nearly 300 years ago acted to a race that were hardly known in his time, and who yet see *the truth* of his writing just as much as the courtiers of Queen Elizabeth did. I mean to mention it to him when I see him.

Saturday, 13th.

The news from Cabul is very unpleasant all this time, and also, what there is, is very uncertain; for the passes are closed, and the reports that make their way through are alarming.

Sunday, 14th.

We had a real good sermon from the Archdeacon this morning; one of those good

sermons with some body in it which one seldom hears. I was tired and did not go in the evening, but went and sat with Mrs. —— while the others were at church.

Thursday, October 2.

There was very bad news from Afghanistan yesterday; General Sale obliged to retreat to Jellalabad, leaving two cannon behind him; some of the Shah's troops had gone over to the enemy, and General Sale was surrounded by thousands of Afghans and with very few provisions, and it is a country in which retreat is almost impossible, full of mountain passes, and no provisions but what an army can take with it. Our Captain M—— is the political agent there. His father, mother, and sister were all here last night, so proud of him and so pleased with all his exertions. Poor people! they have an anxious time before them, and so have many others.

Friday, 3rd.

The accounts are much worse again this morning. There has been a rebellion in the town of Cabul; poor Sir A. Burnes and his

brother murdered, and a Lieutenant Sturt stabbed in five places in the presence of Shah Shooja, who interfered to save him, and succeeded, but seems to have little influence with his wild chiefs. All the news that comes is from a letter of Lady ——, who is in Cabul, to her husband, who was wounded at Jellalabad. She writes very heroically, and always was an active, strong-minded woman. Many people think it impossible that any one man will ever come alive from Cabul. The snow is just beginning to fall, and the passes in the best of times are very dangerous. I never can believe that 3,000 of our troops, Europeans, or sepoys, will allow themselves to be massacred, and, though of course there must be many painful casualties, I cannot see it quite in the despairing line; but the women who are there are a sore subject to think of; the Afghans are such a savage set. We know most of the ladies there; one has seven small children with her, and another two. You may imagine the state George is in, and indeed there is a general gloom in Calcutta; for everybody has friends and relations there, and then the suspense may be so long with the passes all closed.

Sunday, 5th.

No more news, and we have had three wearisome days. That this reverse could not have been foreseen is clear from the fact that the very last letter of Sir W. M.'s that has made its way was full of gratification at the state of the country—how prosperous it was becoming, and how much the Afghans were beginning to appreciate our calm, equitable laws after their own harsh rule—and he meant to start five days after for Bombay. This was dated only October 1, and on the 4th the whole country was in insurrection, Sir A. Burnes killed, &c. He, who generally was open to all reports, held exactly the same opinion as Sir W. M's.

Tuesday, 7th.

Luckily there were rather better accounts yesterday up to the 14th from Cabul, and the 18th from Jellalabad. At the last place General Sale had made a sortie, and beat off the enemy, and got provisions for a month, and thought himself safe. At Cabul they had recaptured two guns, and had some hopes, though faint, of negotiating with the rebels. A

Captain Ferris had fought his way to the frontier from a small fort, and had brought his wife and children safe. There is not much in this, but at all events no shocking catastrophe.

Friday, 10th.

There were accounts three days later from Jellalabad to-day, with a letter from ——, imploring General Sale to march to their relief. This was dated the 14th, the same date as we had heard before, but it gave rather a heightened picture to their state, in order to make General Sale advance. He cannot possibly attempt it, but, with his wife and daughter at Cabul, it must have been a painful thing to feel it a duty to refuse to go to their relief. There are bad bits in life certainly, and this is not a good month.

My chief amusement has been packing. All my curiosities—ivory, china, &c.—are all packed. I thought at first I was going carefully to pack them myself, but, after one day's work, I found it out of the question, and have left it to the servants. People say that the natives are very apt to steal small things on these occasions, but I have never lost anything yet, and mean to trust them.

Sunday, 12th.

The daily reports are all more or less unfavourable, but no certain news comes.

Wednesday, 15th.

We go on very quietly with little scraps of news from Peshawur, which is on the frontier, and the last place with which we have any sure communication. Inasmuch as things are not worse they are better, as the snow, which was beginning to fall, would affect the unhoused assailants more than our troops in their lines. To-day General Sale forwarded a short French note from General ——, begging for help and ending with 'Nous sommes dans un péril extrême.' A note from Mr. ——, which was brought by the same cossid, was not written at all in such extreme alarm. General —— has unluckily obeyed General ——'s orders to march to his relief from Candahar, and that has added to George's alarms. General —— does it against his own conviction. His camels must all die at this time of year; the camel-drivers desert, and the troops have to fight their way in the snow without any comforts, and Candahar, which is now quite quiet, may catch the Cabul fever.

Friday, December 17.

This must go, and I will write a line by the express if there is any more news, or if the post comes in in time to be answered. There was a line from Captain M—— yesterday from Jellalabad, October 28, which even George owns to be the most cheering line he has had, and he looks better in consequence. General Sale's sortie had evidently had a good effect, and provisions had since come in tolerably well, and a neighbouring chief had taken a friendly course and beat off some of the insurgents, and they seemed to be gradually dispersing. Captain M—— had had nothing in writing from Cabul, but the native reports made out that things were looking better there for the Feringees (the English). If General —— is driven to make one good attempt, and could catch and hang one or two rebel chiefs, which he easily might, I really could feel quite hopeful again.

I wish we knew when we were going home, or that we had a symptom of a ship or anything. Nobody is ready but me; my boxes are all

nailed down, and my room looks quite ready for my successor.

Love to all.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Calcutta, November 14, 1841.

So you were at Malta on your way home; so very nice to think that anyone should ever really be on their way home. In February I think we shall know the sort of feeling it gives. In the meantime I please myself about once a week by taking some preparatory step—lists of linens, gowns, books and things in general. Just now I have seen the woman who is to take the place of Mrs. M. Jones, who I hate the notion of parting with. However, the woman I have got is in the constant habit of voyaging backwards and forwards, and may know how to make a ship comfortable; I am sure I don't. She (the woman) looks like an albatross in her cap and artificial flowers; she has no front teeth, and I am longing to know whether they dropped out naturally, or whether

a very young husband she has knocked them down her throat.

I do so envy you having only the bit of sea to do which tumbles about between England and Malta; I see you stepping out of the yacht upon dry land and kicking it back into the sea. I imagine that by this time Lord —— must see the error of his marine ways, and will stick to dry land for the remainder of his life. I cannot say much for the formation of that man's mind who first thought of undergoing five months of sea to settle in this shrivelled cinder of a country. To be sure we know what 'jade' is; the Chinese have a profound veneration for it, and think that the touch of it cures many disorders. The other day a man, whom George had commissioned to send him anything curious that came in his way in China, sent him a jade vase and a jade cup 'puffectly lovely'—so large of the kind, so perfect and well carved—but, as they will not cure our disorders, we thought them more expensive than we liked. However, now he is grown attached to them and talks of 'my jade ornaments' proudly and ostentatiously; he began by saying familiarly 'my jades,' but the incorrectness of this ex-

pression made the whole staff blush so very much he has given it up.

I see exactly the fidget you have taken about that string of pearls; it does sound like an unnatural idea that he should go and buy them for his own wearing, but you are not the guilty woman that led him into this extravagance. They were pronounced by the European jewellers to be so good and cheap, that Emily persuaded him that it was as good an investment for money as any other, and in the meantime she wears the investment at intervals. When he has done talking of 'my jades' he talks of 'my pearls,' and will not vacate his property in them; he probably means, when he gets home, to *cut out* Runjeet and hang them around his horse's neck.

Yours affectionately,

F. H. EDEN.

FROM THE HON. EMILY EDEN TO ——.

Calcutta, Friday, December 31, 1841.

This is the end of our last Indian year, and, as I think the chief *habit* that I have established is that of writing to you, I may as well wind up the year with it and wish you a new happy

one ; and, in fact, it must be happy—part of it—because you will have me with you. Such a godsend! Well, I shall be very happy myself; but, between ourselves, I think you will be a little bored ; I shan't say why, but you will see. Now that all my things are packed up, and they will all be finished to-morrow, and that I have taken to dream of England again, and woke up in a fright last night because I could not find my way out of the Strand, I begin to think seriously how it will all be, and I see horrid changes. I am grown indolent and helpless, and afraid of saying what I think, and afraid of trouble, and so on. But if we have, what everybody kindly promises us, a singularly slow voyage, starting in March, it will be near your country time of year when we arrive, and, after having seen everybody once, who is in London, I shall like so much going off there with you, and you can talk me into shape and put me up to things in general. It will be very nice ; you can teach me a little at a time, and the talk must all be on your side, because I have told you all about India, and 'that's done ;' but, with all the letters and journals, there is still much I wish to hear. In the meanwhile Lord

Ellenborough is 'ploughing the ocean,' and must now be past the Cape, and we have not a morsel of ship to go home in, and do not know where we are to find one. We are taking the refusal of several of the best country ships that are advertised for the end of February, and they are all willing to wait our uncertain time, which is very obliging of them.

Saturday, January 1, 1842.

The last year out of England. Mind you all keep well a few months longer. Don't go and stand in a draught, or eat a quantity of salad, or take a wrong medicine. Mind you are very careful.

I went yesterday evening with Captain M—— to survey our house in the fort, as Fanny and I shall most likely take ourselves off there, when we hear Lord Ellenborough is in the river. It is a melancholy looking house, like all habitations in a fort, but cool and quiet, and, with a little clean furniture, will do very well; and I think the new-comers would rather have this house to themselves even at first. After the Fort House we went on to the Orphan Asylum. They had a holiday with a

picnic dinner at the Botanical Gardens last Wednesday, and I sent for my private share, a Twelfth-cake with a little prize pinned to each slice. The schoolmistress says they had never drawn Twelfth-cake before, and were quite delighted. A little French workbox was the great object of ambition.

Sunday, 2nd.

We had one or two gentlemen at dinner yesterday.

We went to the Fort Church this morning; and in the evening George and I went on board the 'Bucephalus' to see ——'s cabin and ——'s. The probability is that we shall go home in one of these country ships, as no Queen's ship seems to be forthcoming; and they are, in fact, nearly as comfortable. ——'s cabin looked very comfortable for a cabin; but what a piece of business a ship is. I detest it; and, moreover, I was so giddy I could hardly get back to our boat again.

Thursday, 6th.

A very interesting letter from Lady Sale and a note from Sir —— have made their way.

Nothing can seem more hopeless; only three days' provisions left, and then, as she says very calmly, she believes they are to eat the few ponies and the camels left alive. The enemy had proposed a capitulation—the married men and the women to be left as hostages, the Shah to be given up, and the soldiers to give up their arms and to be escorted to the frontier, which is, in other words, to come out to be massacred. Her letter is wonderfully composed, and indeed very spirited.

Monday, 10th.

I have been so unwell the last fortnight, that I thought I would try two or three days on the river; came on board the 'Soonamookie' at eight this morning, with Rosina and my jemadar and all my *suwarree* to take care of me; and we have been floating in a slow manner all day; and the kitmutgar cooked an excellent luncheon, and, except that Zoe is rather unhappy, nothing can do better. This is a beautiful boat to live in; five excellent cabins, and fitted up with every possible comfort. She cannot sail a bit, but floating about is all that is necessary, and we have plenty of boats to tow her.

Wednesday, 12th.

I got back to dinner on Monday rather refreshed by the operation, and Fanny and I are both going again to-morrow.

Saturday, 15th.

Fanny and I have taken two more days in the 'Soonamookie' with great success; it is growing hot on shore, but the air is very nice on the river, and, with books and writing, the day fills up very well; and, as the boat occasionally *whabbles* about a little, I look upon it as a good practice for the great horrid voyage.

Rosina gave a farewell party to six ayahs of her acquaintance and several of my servants, and she said that, as she had seen the Zoological and the *horse play*, as she calls Astley's, in England, she must see the Botanical Gardens here; and so we have got leave from Dr. —— to let them dine there; and we were moored nearly opposite to the place, and it seemed to be a very pleasant party. She has got such a pretty scarf to give to you, notwithstanding all my exhortations, and is looking forward to being with me while Wright goes to visit her sister.

Wednesday, 19th.

It is very odd that no letters whatever have come from Cabul for three weeks, but the reports are all favourable.

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Government House, January 14, 1842.

I did not hear from you last month. I suppose, as usual, you were tossing about on that dreadful sea, and I did not write; for, as you will have heard, we were in a melancholy way about that insurrection at Cabul; and it has been protracted anxiety, for the peril of all there is still very great, and I fear before I send this there will be bad tidings to tell. In other parts of Afghanistan everything has been quieted. The direct intelligence from Cabul is so scanty we hardly understand the state of affairs there, or why, with five thousand troops, no effort has been made; we only know that the camp is surrounded and provisions failing fast. Lady Macnaghton, Lady Sale, and many other ladies we know are there, some with large families of children; and to retreat, even

without an enemy to face, is at this time of the year almost impossible. The last letter received from Sir A. Burnes, immediately before his murder, spoke of the extreme tranquillity of the country; so this outbreak found them totally unprepared. As you may conceive George is very much harassed by anxiety for the fate of all there. It is very hard for him that, during the very last weeks of his stay here, when there is no time for him to get things straight again, this misfortune should have happened from the too great security of those on the spot. And a fearful misfortune it is likely to prove. Knowing what a savage people the Afghans are, I never can get the horrors that may happen out of my head. Letters from Lady Sale have been received by her husband. She seems to be a wonderful woman; quite aware of their desperate state, but not one word of terror.

Judging from the last intelligence, we must hear something decisive before this goes; so I will write no more about it now.

My dearest, whatever you do, never settle in a country where there is anything in the shape of war. I cannot say how much I look forward to Lord Ellenborough's arrival; all this

must be decided one way or the other before he can be here. I am sure the sooner George is on the sea the better, for he has had too much on his mind lately for any health to stand long in a country like this. I write you none but low letters now, because we have stayed in this far-off country a year longer than we meant —a year too long, in fact.

January 18.

I must send this to-day, though there is no direct communication from Cabul; there are more cheering reports, and I begin to hope they may hold out till the winter is over, when reinforcements can be sent them. If you could see my passage; thirteen large packing-cases, each large enough to hold our house at Knightsbridge, and London written on them. Ariffe is writing a Persian list of the contents, which will be conveniently useful to Mary, the old housemaid. I should like to see her face when she sees the things, which it has been the sole employment of four men to take charge of; and if the handle of a China cup is broken, they come in procession to show it.

The only things about which I am baffled

are the feather fans for you; the Emperor knew how it would hurt my feelings to have none, and none have come since the war began that are worth taking. But perhaps some may come still; of those which were ordered I hear nothing. George just now had a letter from some rajah full of State grievances, and a post-script:—'May I ask for a puppet show to be sent to my dominions?' and a formal note from the Government Secretary:—'I have ventured to send his Highness a puppet show.'

In two or three days I hope to have a letter from you, and you will teach me how pleasant it is to be in England again after having been tossed about the rest of the world. Good-bye, dearest.

Yours most affectionately,

F. H. EDEN.

FROM THE HON. EMILY EDEN TO ——.

Calcutta, Sunday, January 29, 1842.

MY DEAREST ——,—I do not mean to make up much of a journal this time, though I have just discovered that this will not be my last letter; I suppose I shall write again somewhere between March 1st and 4th from Kedgeree, just as the first little symptoms of sea-sickness

are beginning, and leave the letters with whatever faithful aide-de-camp may have followed our fortunes that far.

The accounts from Cabul are more distressing and incomprehensible every day. One of Lady ——'s simple good letters have come to hand. She talks with bitter disgust of the cowardice of the whole proceeding, and says the retreat was to begin the next day, and her son-in-law, Lieutenant ——, who was wounded the other day, adds a note to the same purpose and says, 'God may help us, for we are not allowed to help ourselves.'

There is a Colonel ——, who has been through all the Peninsular War, and he dined alone with us yesterday; he is a regular old soldier, and has been wounded till he is out of all shape. He talked over this business with George, and says that it is totally inexplicable; the troops are nearer 6,000 than 5,000, with artillery, ammunition, &c.; in difficulties certainly about provisions, but still they own to having eight days' provisions left. He says that force would have considered themselves equal to fighting their own way, if they had been obliged to retreat, against any *civilised* army;

that every soldier can carry bread for seven days, and they had only seventy miles to march to Jellalabad; that the season was as much against the enemy as themselves. Altogether it is a horrid history.

Monday.

There are letters from Jellalabad. The army *did* evacuate Cabul on the 4th, and were attacked by their nominal escort immediately on leaving cantonments. A Doctor —— is the only man who has arrived in Jellalabad—perhaps the only one that ever will—and he is so confused between fatigue and wounds that Captain —— says it is difficult to make out any story from him; but he says that, at the end of the third day's march, the cold and the dangers were so great that the ladies and children were sent back to Cabul under *the care of Mahomet Ukbar*! Think of poor Lady —— given over to her husband's murderer; General —— and Colonel —— went into the enemy's camp and gave themselves up; the troops then held together under Colonel —— for two marches more, and then he was killed, and they fell into complete disorder; and

after that Doctor —— knew no more except that he saw several officers lying dead, amongst others poor Lieutenant Sturt. Such a dreadful massacre, and such a disgraceful transaction altogether, the Afghans actually *allowing* them to take only the ammunition in their pouches, and then the two senior officers giving themselves up. It is utterly inexplicable. Those unfortunate women, too, in the hands of such savages.

Tuesday.

We have almost decided on going home in the 'Hungerford' (merchant ship). The 'Endymion,' besides all other objections to her, could not be here in time. She has only had one accident of running aground while Captain Grey was on shore, and her sickness was not *indigenous*; but, while she was in dock, the sailors lived on shore at Bombay and got what they there call the mud fever, and he was obliged to take her to sea to save the men. However, she is out of the question, and the 'Wellesley' also. The 'Hungerford' is a very old ship and a slow sailor, but a great favourite, and what they call a very easy ship—

a foolish term and obviously untrue. She has also the particular recommendation of being the only ship that I have always declared I would never go home in, because of her age. Now, as the only other resolution I ever pronounced was declaring from the time I was seven years old that I never would go out to India, it seems that the going home from it in the 'Hungerford' will be an act of great consistency. Captain ——, who settles all those things, hears everywhere that she is the most comfortable ship in the river, and has been newly cased in teak; so she is about the safest. I dare say he is right. Mr. —— came out in her two years ago, and likes the captain so much that he has him to live at his house now when he is in port; and, in short, everybody says, we may be ten days longer than in any other ship, but the superior comfort will make up for it. They really say that she hardly rolls at all, even in a gale of wind. Those horrid gales of wind! they make me feel faint even to think of them. I saw Mrs. —— this afternoon, and I hope she will go with us.

Captain —— and I went on the river in the evening, meaning to look at the lumbering

old tub, but she had gone up to the Custom House, and it was too dark to go on board by the time we had got there.

Monday.

I went to the Fort Church yesterday, where we had a new preacher, who gave us such a beautiful sermon; it was quite refreshing. But —— has taken advantage of his coming to introduce the long service there, much to the detriment of the soldiers, who cannot possibly stand it in the hot weather; and it will drive away a large congregation, who had taken refuge there from the long service of the cathedral.

Wednesday.

Captain —— had a letter lent to him with such horrible details of that retreat; it has made me feel quite ill. All the accounts are gathered from Dr. ——, who is apparently the only survivor of that army except the few prisoners, who, it is to be hoped, are murdered by this time. He says that the soldiers had lost all heart long before they left Cabul, and had said they were so ill supported they would not try to

fight any more. Mahomet Ukbar accompanied them, and pointed out the places where they were to sleep, which were invariably exposed to the fire of the enemy; the snow was three feet deep, and they had nothing to eat. He claimed the ladies as prisoners, and their husbands went with them. Lady ——, they say, was wounded by a matchlock ball. Dr. —— was seen through a spying-glass by one of the officers defending himself from some Afghans, and they rushed out and saved him. He was on a pony which had had nothing to eat since they left Cabul; his sword had broken off in the last struggle, and he was very much wounded. An officer who was with him had a person mounted behind him, and they had kept up nearly to the end, and were then, after being desperately wounded, carried off separately.

We have been on board our ship. It looks very horrible, as all ships do, and the lower cabins are very dark and small compared to those in the 'Jupiter;' but we have a good sitting cabin, next to George's, on the poop, and those below are, I believe, much quieter to sleep in; and, after the first three weeks, the heat

will not be very great. Still I opine that, if it had not been for that little accident of Noah and the Ark, which gave men false notions of trusting themselves on the water, it never was intended that they should try so mad an experiment.

Friday.

Our work of packing is progressing, but not so fast as it ought, considering that the 'Walmer Castle,' which left England only ten days before Lord Ellenborough, is actually in and up at Calcutta. He must not come before his ten days are fairly over, for the 'Hungerford' cannot be ready before the 1st of March.

Captain —— and I have been to the upholsterer's this morning to hurry on the furniture and to choose a secrétaire for George's cabin, bookcases, &c. I had never been into any of these shops before, and had no idea of their magnificence. People send a great deal of furniture home as presents; it is so well carved, and then the climate prevents veneering; so everything is of solid mahogany. I believe Mr. —— is also of solid mahogany; he looks like it, and it seems impossible to hurry him.

He made such solemn asseverations that spring cushions made extremely springy were so good for sea-sickness, that they rolled *with* the ship, that when he went *springing* home on one of his own sofas he was able to sleep like a top when everybody else was rolled out of bed, that I fondly believed him; and my couch is made of very elastic springs, and now I hear that they never will be quiet at sea, and that I shall be constantly bounded up to the ceiling and back again. It will be rather an interesting game of battledore and shuttlecock when a gale comes on, and I shall be flying about the cabin for hours together.

Saturday, February 12.

In one of the accounts from Cabul they say poor Mrs. ——'s little girl, of five years old, was missing when the ladies were taken away, and was supposed to have been murdered, or carried away. Poor little thing! it is to be hoped the former. When we last came through Kurnaul they were in our camp for some time, and this was such a pretty child. In some respects the news is not so bad as might be. Shah Shoojah is holding his own and gaining strength every

day, and Mahomed Ukbar does not seem to have any great number of followers to bring against Jellalabad. General —— and Captain —— and everybody there write with great bravery and confidence, and say their soldiers are in good spirits.

Calcutta, 20th.

No further news, except that a letter from one of the ladies has been received, and they and their children are hitherto kindly treated, which is a great relief; and there are hopes of buying back the little girl. It looks, too, as if there were great dissensions among the Afghans themselves, and Shah Shoojah still either has some power or they allow it to him out of policy. General —— and Colonel —— are mentioned as the only prisoners except the married men who were carried off with their wives. What a situation for the first and second in command of a large army, of which they only survive! People are becoming rabid to hear their story; they must have some excuse that has never transpired.

George is looking shockingly, but not ill. All this worry has, however, made a difference

of ten years at least in his look, and I am afraid you will be much struck with his alteration when you see him.

Our ship is meaning to be ready this day week, so Lord Ellenborough may come now as soon as he can.

Ever yours most affectionately,

E. E.

TO THE SAME.

Calcutta, Tuesday, March 1, 1842.

Such a bustle. Lord Ellenborough landed yesterday, after everybody had settled that he could not be here for ten days; and we have nothing ready.

The reception was very pretty. Fanny and I saw it out of the window; plenty of troops, &c., and George met him at the bottom of the great stairs, and they were really glad to meet. He was sworn in immediately. We did not meet him till dinner-time.

Friday, 4th.

We have been here six years to-day. It would have been so nice to have sailed this morning, that is as far as sailing ever can be nice. The wind blew horribly last night; and

I began to think whether it would not be advisable to black my face, put on simply a muslin petticoat and veil, and settle down as a native. That horrid sea, and four months at least of it! If it were not for you, and a few others, I never could set about that voyage. It is the only thing I am a coward about, but I cannot conceal the melancholy fact that, whenever I think of it, I am frightened to death, and it prevents my eating anything now. That dear dry land, if ever we make it again! Mind it is quite dry.

This is my birthday, moreover, and, besides fright, I am nearly dead of old age. George gave me such a pretty pair of earrings to-day —quite his own thought. I suppose he has got a trick giving presents this month. I am quite tired of buying for him and of seeing native jewellers. I bought eight rings the last two days—emeralds, sapphires, and diamonds—that, strung altogether, were quite a sight to see. The servants like them better than 10*l.* in money, which they spend at once, as Mussulmans think it a sin to save.

Barrackpore, Saturday.

Fanny, Captain ——, and I came up yesterday, and George comes to-day; but we can only stay till Monday night, for the 'Hungerford' has to drop down to Kedgeree on Thursday, so we must go back to see the cabins fitted up.

Friday, March 11.

My dearest, it is just dinner-time, and we go off at half-past six to-morrow. We have had such a week, and I am really *beat* by all the leave-takings, &c. They have all been very kind, and any place where one has had no misfortune for six years one becomes attached to.

Do not wonder if we do not appear for five months. Such things and worse have been Our cabins looked very nice when the ship started. We catch her up at Kedgeree. How hot it will be!

Yours most affectionately,

E. E.

FROM THE HON. F. H. EDEN TO A FRIEND.

Government House, March 1, 1842.

These are my last Indian words, and few they must be. Our ship and all our dear little

things are what they call 'dropping down the river;' an operation during which ships are regularly wrecked two or three times; the pilots say because the river changes its course. We career after it in a steamer to-morrow, and a steamer, we hope, is to tow us across the line; but the steamers here are not in a very efficient state, and this one will probably 'knock up' before we get half way.

Lord Ellenborough arrived twelve days ago, and we are all living together and are excessively fond of each other. I declare I have been more amused for these same twelve days than I have been since I came to India. He startles people so very much by the extraordinary activity of his English notions; the climate will settle a great many of them, and in the meantime he really is so good-natured and hospitable we are quite touched by it.

I can write no more; I cannot tell you what there is to be done in these last days, but we shall meet soon, I trust. How nice that is! But the ship! It has 80,000 cockroaches on board; that I know as a fact. I have been low-spirited, too, at times during the last week; so many have shown real sorrow at parting who

I did not know cared a bit for us, and then the public demonstrations to George have affected me in the highest degree. At a time when we have been refusing all parting fêtes on account of that Cabul calamity, there never was anything like the enthusiasm for him at the public meetings which have been held. At this moment the whole court is filled with the carriages of people coming up with the address. The lowest as well as the highest are here, pouring in subscriptions for his statue. It is a comfort to know that the ladies are well treated by the Afghans, and everything is going on well in other parts of Afghanistan; but the loss of life occasioned by local mismanagement is fearful. God bless you, dearest! I wish there were not four months of sea between us.

Yours most affectionately,

F. H. EDEN.

THE END

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